

# 26<sup>th</sup> International Public Relations Research Conference



*“Research Supporting the  
Profession: Difficult Topics from Fake  
News to Corporate Advocacy and  
Quiet Quitting”*

March 2–4, 2023

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## 26th International Public Relations Research Conference March 2–4, 2023

Welcome to the twenty-sixth annual meeting of the International Public Relations Research Conference. As those of you who are returning know, this conference is different than other public relations research meetings or conferences in several ways. First, this conference was and continues to focus entirely on public relations research from a variety of perspectives—theoretical, experimental, case study, survey, participant-observation, measurement, pedagogical, and more. Second, this is a conference where people talk with each other not to each other. Third, presentations are based on their projected outcomes—outcomes that may not support the study’s hypotheses or goals—or approaches that may not be “mainline.” There’s always something controversial being presented. Fourth, this is a participative meeting—we expect presenters to discuss their research, not report it; we expect questioning throughout the meeting, not just the various sessions. And, finally, this year we will award completed papers from \$500 to \$1,500 each as the *Fullintel Media Insights and Impact Award*, the *Arthur W. Page Center Benchmarking Award*, the *Plank Leadership Award*, the *University of Miami School of Communication Top Student Paper Award*, the *Baylor University Department of Journalism, Public Relations & New Media Top Ethics Paper Award*, the *Peter Debreceny Corporation Communication Award*, the *Koichi Yamamura International Strategic Communication Award*, the *Boston University Award for the Top Paper about Public Relations and the Social and Emerging Media*, the *International ABERJE Award*, the *Pat Jackson Body of Knowledge*, the *University of Georgia ADPR Excellence Top Paper Award for Advancing Theory and Practice*, and the *IPRRC Top Paper Award*.

IPRRC is proud to celebrate its 26th year in Downtown Orlando. The DoubleTree by Hilton Downtown Orlando offers many restaurants and shops within a short shuttle or car service ride. Shuttle service within a 3-mile radius is available through the hotel clerks. It takes approximately 30 minutes to Orlando International Airport (MCO) and 40 minutes to the major tourist attractions: Walt Disney World, Universal Orlando, and aquariums. In the hotel, you will find the rooftop terrace with a large pool for individual discussions of common research interests, and an overall better conference facility.

### What Can I Expect?

If you have been with us before you know that this is an exhaustive 3-day discussion of public relations research and theory. The actual sessions begin following opening welcomes at 8:00 and at 8:30 with the first round of discussions. Each session consists of 6 presentations going on simultaneously—each author(s) will quickly present his or her (their) presentation in about a 7-minute time frame and then for the next 8 minutes discuss with listeners the ramifications of their presentation. After 15 minutes participants are asked to move to another table for another discussion. (Please note that participants may have to make choices about whom they discuss within each session, we will have many sessions with four rounds but six presenters.) Each session begins on time and ends on time. We fully expect that discussions will continue out of session, at lunch, over refreshments, or drinks. We hope that several research collaborations are born from each conference—whether between academics or between academics and professionals.

If you need a program, please go to the IPRRC website, [www.iprrc.org](http://www.iprrc.org), and download it to your phone or tablet. In the program you will find abstracts and statements as to how this research impacts the profession for each presentation. Please review each and use it to decide which presentations you would like to hear and who is presenting. For those who do not have access to the website program, we post session information each morning and afternoon outside the presentation room. This is a *discussion-formatted conference* and your attendance at sessions is what makes it the success it has been.

### For Presenters:

First time presenters almost always find that they have problems with the timing of each round within a session. You will find it best to present an executive summary of your findings with handouts for

more specific findings. We do not provide projection equipment and frown on PowerPoint presentations via laptop but promise not to confiscate from those who do. Please rehearse your presentation—experience has taught us that by the third round of presenting, you will be where you should be. One final comment: when told it is time to shift tables, please do so immediately. Holding up the next round only reduces the time you have.

**For Participants:**

Initially, our presenters were the primary participants, and all spoke the same language (research, theory, pedagogy). Somewhere around IPRRC2 public relations professionals began attending and began asking practical application questions or, as in the case of theory and experimental research, began asking the “what does this mean?” and “so what?” questions. Please ask for clarification, for definitions, and for how these presentations may advance the practice of public relations. Seek insight and offer suggestions for future research—research you may become a part of. We do ask that you do so politely and hope that we create a supportive communication climate. We have in the past had to pull some participants aside and talk about the proper way to criticize; hopefully, this won’t be a problem this year.

When asked to move to the next session, please do so quickly—however, you do not have to move, and you may stay for more than one round of discussions. Be prepared for multiple circles around each table as the session progresses. It will be noisy, but we’ve found this not to be a major problem.

Finally, given COVID and how it can disrupt interaction, we are asking that if you are wearing a mask, please keep your mask on while participating—except when you are eating or drinking in the conference hall. If you are not feeling well contact a Board or Team member. The hotel will be cleaning and sanitizing between sessions; there are also hand sanitizer stations throughout the building.

**For All:**

Your registration gives you three breakfasts at the conference hotel and three lunches. We hold a “meet and greet” Wednesday evening and we will celebrate our 26th anniversary on Friday evening where finger/comfort foods and drinks are provided. We encourage all of you to engage with our social media channels #IPRRC26. We fully expect that participants will informally group and visit some of the fine restaurants in the Downtown Orlando area. Lists of places to eat are available at the front desk. The Awards Session will be held shortly after the last presentation. We will be handing out over \$10,000 in awards again this year. Additionally, we will have a student cash drawing where all registered student names will be put in a container, and several will be drawn at random by Board members. You must be present to win!

If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to contact me or members of the Board of Directors, Advisory Committee, or conference staff—we all have identifying ribbons attached to our badges. We’ll do all we can to make your stay as educational and pleasant as possible.



Don W. Stacks  
Chief Executive Officer

# 26<sup>th</sup> International Public Relations Research Conference

## March 2-4, 2023

### ORDER OF PRESENTATION BY DAY AND SESSION<sup>1</sup>

#### Wednesday, March 1, 2023

- 3:00 p.m.     **Board of Directors** (closed meeting)
- 4:00 p.m.     **Registration**
- 6:00 p.m.     **Meet & Greet** (Lobby Bar)

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<sup>1</sup> Each presentation listed consists of title, authors, basic abstract, and impact statement. All presentations are in the ballroom. The numbers reference the table the presentation will be at. Speakers stay at tables; participants may rotate to other tables or stay for other presentations and discussions.

Thursday, March 2, 2023

7:30 a.m.      **Registration**

8:00 a.m.

**Opening Session:**

**Don W. Stacks, Presiding**

**Session 1:**

**8:30–9:30 a.m.**

**Don W. Stacks, Presiding**

**1. Future-Proofing Public Relations Through Trend Research: Introducing a Novel Interdisciplinary Approach and Its Practical Implications**

*Ansgar Zerfass, Daniel Ziegele, Leipzig University, Germany; Sunje Clausen, Stefan Stieglitz, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany*

This paper reports on a successfully tested approach that draws on futures research to identify trends that will soon influence public relations practice. It combines a systematic analysis of developments in society, management, and technology with the assessments of researchers and communication leaders. Scarcity management, Augmented workflows and Unimagination are outlined as exemplary trends for 2023.

The paper outlines an approach to identify trends impacting public relations practice ahead of current professional and academic debates. It argues that most academic research in our field and popular trend studies by trade journals and agencies reinforce existing knowledge but fail to introduce new topics early. Systematically tracking and evaluating basic and applied research in adjacent disciplines helps communication leaders reflect on existing practices and identify relevant areas for action ahead of their peers. The approach has been applied successfully for three consecutive years now and stimulated many concrete activities and follow-up projects in practice.

**2. Measuring Social Media Engagement Intentions in Corporate Social Advocacy: A Measurement Validation**

*Duli Shi, New Mexico State University*

This study validated a holistic measurement of social media engagement intentions in corporate social advocacy based on Dolan et al.'s (2015) conceptualization. Consumption, contribution, *creation*, dormancy, detachment, and destruction covered diverse intensities and valences of publics' online engagement actions. Furthermore, a parsimonious measurement model is proposed to benefit future research.

The comprehensive measurement of social media engagement intentions highlights the importance of anticipating and monitoring publics' diverse social media activities, especially in the CSA context. The validated measures for consumption, contribution, creation, dormancy, detachment, and destruction offer an additional tool for practitioners to gauge CSA effectiveness. This study suggests that organizations become more mindful of diverse (no)voices from publics, which ultimately benefits both sides.

3. **The True Impact of Internal Factors on Organizational Authenticity During a Crisis: An Application of Fully Functioning Society Theory (FFST)**

*Celine Hong, So Young Lee, & Bokyoung Kim, Rowan University*

Situated in Fully Functioning Society Theory (FFST), the current study not only tested (N=346) the impact of internal factors on organizational authenticity, but also discussed the efficacy of communication strategies. Our results revealed valuable insights that make significant contributions to theory and practices in crisis communication and management, when dealing with public health crises that are seen as sociopolitical.

Utilizing the Fully Functioning Society Theory, the findings are novel as they suggest political parties offset the crisis communication efforts generated by universities. The fact that participants were from three university with different political backgrounds indicates the members' political identify truly decide the evaluation toward their community. To reiterate, our findings expand upon the theoretical approach in a crisis communication research stream and support the argument that crisis communication strategy should be applied in a conjunction with internal factors.

4. **A Brand-New Opportunity: Student-Athletes? Brand Image in the Age of NIL**

*Elizabeth Cox, University of Oklahoma*

The ability for student-athletes to profit from their name, image, and likeness has changed the landscape of collegiate athletics. This thematic analysis is one of the first to understand the implication of NIL to public relations by analyzing how student-athletes' brand image on social media aligns with their team's.

The findings of this study will give insight to public relations professionals in collegiate athletic departments as they work to manage the new landscape where student-athletes can profit from their own name, image, and likeness (NIL). The implications consider the risks and benefits that develop as athletes manage an individualized brand and endure an additional reputational risk toward themselves and their team which must also be managed by the public relations professionals in the department.

5. **Data-Washing or Data Driven: Deciphering the Role of Data in Public Relations Practice**

*Devin Knighton & Michael Burke, Brigham Young University*

PR professionals use the word data more now, but the extent to which they use data to drive decisions is suspect. This study examines all articles in PR Week that mention data since 2019 and the websites of 75 agencies, resulting in a scoring system that ranks agencies and identifies best practices.

This study can help PR professionals understand how data is being used to drive decisions, the tools employed, the methods utilized, and the role that data can play in accessing the C-Suite. The scoring system shown can also help agency professionals to benchmark their approach to data against their peers.

6. **When Good Guys Apologize Badly: Exploring Apology Delivery on YouTube**

*Jean Kelso Sandlin & Monica L. Gracyalny, California Lutheran University*

This study examined participants' responses (n=297) to identically worded apologies delivered in three ways on YouTube. Significant differences in perceptions of sincerity and forgiveness were found in the deviant vs. normative apologies, but not between the normative and written apologies – demonstrating written apologies can be effective on

media-rich platforms.

These findings can assist public relations practitioners as they counsel clients preparing for a public apology. Since the identically worded written statement and normatively delivered YouTube apology did not differ significantly in their perceptions of sincerity, forgiveness or intentions of future support, company leaders who demonstrate discomfort in front of a camera or demonstrate any deviant nonverbal behaviors while apologizing (i.e. smirking, smiling, etc), may be better advised to distribute a written statement. Written statements can still be effective when distributed on video-enabled, media-rich platforms.

## **Session 2**

**9:45–10:45 a.m.**

**Donald K. Wright, Presiding**

### **1. SELLING SUPERHEROES: DC FILMS' PR CHALLENGES**

*Nick Smith, Branden Birmingham, & Roslin Smith, State University of New York-Fredonia*  
Hollywood spends years promoting its movies: announcing directors, creating posters, and organizing premieres. Thanks partly to high-profile public relations campaigns, superhero movies are at the forefront of audience attention. Corporate shake-ups, a lack of faith in directors, and wayward stars, makes DC a complex, fascinating motion picture PR case study.

The research deconstructs DC Films' social practices and whether large companies have a responsibility to their consumers. There is a lot to learn by examining the choices DC Films has made and the strategies it has attempted as it competes with other, more successful production companies. .

### **2. The Impact of the Global Pandemic on Pursuit of Professional Development Opportunities in Public Relations**

*Marlene S. Neill, Baylor University, Sharee Broussard, Mobile County, AL, & Madison Walkes, Baylor University*

This study examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on candidates' pursuits of the APR credential using social cognitive career theory (SCCT). Researchers conducted four focus groups with practitioners who had successfully passed the exam in the past two years and provide guidance for educators, practitioners and professional development programs.

By examining the experiences of successful candidates who completed professional development training during the turbulent times of the global pandemic, it provides insights into the essential factors that can contribute to achievement of personal and professional career goals. The SCCT provides a useful roadmap to help other professionals plan their journey and consider all the essential components they will need to be successful.

3. **Quality of Communication Consulting: Demystifying the Concept and Current Practices Based on an International Study of Strategic Communication Practices**

*Daniel Ziegele, Sabrina Doberts, Ansgar Zerfass, University of Leipzig, Germany; & Dejan Vercic, University of Ljubljana*

***Koichi Yamamura International Strategic Communication Award***

This study takes the rising global demand for strategic communication consulting as a starting point to examine the quality of communication consulting and common sources of conflict through a survey of 1,558 clients and consultants in 43 countries. Critical factors for ensuring quality from both sides and practical implications are discussed.

This study demystifies quality in communication consulting (an intangible and interactive service) by identifying the levels and characteristics of quality in the field. It helps leaders in communications departments justify and evaluate spending on external consulting. It also enables agencies and consulting firms to gain competitive advantage by mitigating conflicts and focusing on aspects of quality that really matter. The study's international focus makes it particularly relevant for strategic communication practitioners working across borders.

4. **How Should Companies Communicate About Geopolitical Issues with Employees: Through the Lens of the Russia-Ukraine War**

*Yi Grace Yi, Boston University, Yufan Sunny Qin, James Madison University, Jie Jin, University of Florida, Zifei Fay Chen, University of San Francisco, & Linjuan Rita Men, University of Florida*

This study examines companies' responses to the geopolitical conflicts associated with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Results from an online survey of full-time employees in the U.S. will address the impact of companies' action-based and communication-based reactions on employees' emotional, perceptual, and behavioral outcomes toward the company and the issue.

Findings of this study will offer insights for public relations professionals on how to respond to rising geological issues. We propose that corporations' action-based reactions and ethical communication can complement each other. When corporate communication demonstrates attributes of being caring, compassionate, and tentative to listen, employees will perceive company's reactions as morally uplifting. This perception will strengthen their sense of belonging to the company and further motivate them to partake in company and geopolitical issue advocacy. Study results will provide guidelines on how companies can generate favorable outcomes at the corporate level and empower employees to champion social justice and human rights at the societal level.

5. **How to Become Truly "Sustainable": A Study of Top Retail Brands' Sustainability Reports and Consumer Evaluations on Corporate Sustainability Communications**

*Bokyung Kim, So Young Lee, & Celine Seoyeon Hong, Rowan University*

From a mixed method of content analyses of top retail brands' sustainability reports and earned media coverage, and a follow up survey with 500 US adults, this study

examined and found the significant associations between Corporate Sustainability Communications, consumer's CSC evaluations, and their shared behaviors. Yet, we found a lack of similarity in the type of CSC strategies and terminologies from the reports.

Considering limited number of studies addressing the corporate sustainability communications in our discipline, and assessing how US top retailers implemented their CSC in their owned and earned media, this study will provide empirical evidence of what CSC strategies and terminologies were present in 2021-2022 annual corporate environmental, social and governance (ESG) reports. From a follow up survey, this study will also showcase consumers' expectations and evaluations of which sustainable practices and topics/areas they prefer.

6. **“In This Day in Age, You Have to Stand for Something”**: Examining Source Effects and Fan Reactions to the NBA's Corporate Social Advocacy (CSA) Statements, *Holly Overton, Pennsylvania State University, Michael Vafeiadis, Auburn University, & Virginia Harrison, Clemson University*

This study extends the CSA conversation to sports communication, which has become increasingly involved in advancing social causes. We found that the source of CSA messaging matters: Conservative fans perceive the message as inauthentic and are less supportive than liberal fans, especially when the message comes from the league's commissioner.

The implications of this study for the practice of CSA communication are multifaceted. First, perceptions of CSA within sports organizations seem to be largely viewed according to political lens, meaning sport organizations may be alienating some fans by practicing CSA. Additionally, conservatives who saw the commissioner relaying the message may be the most negatively affected, highlighting the role of CEO activism in sport. Interestingly, viewing an athlete's message seemed to motivate support among liberal fans to act on behalf of the social cause, perhaps demonstrating the acceptance and authenticity of athletes leading the CSA conversation, aligning with sport's rich history of activism. Sport CSA is risky and may be perceived according to political views but is no less important for advancing social causes.

### **Session 3:**

**11:00–Noon**

**Sean Williams, Presiding**

1. **Are You More Motivated to Exercise to Fight Against Climate Change? Testing Messages for A Fitness Mobile App Based Crowdsourcing Campaign**

*Sumin Fang, University of the Fraser Valley, Canada*

Crowdsourcing has become a common strategy to engage publics. Little research has been done to test what message features of a crowdsourcing campaign are more effective. This study applies Advice Response Theory (ART) to test different message features of a crowdsourcing campaign, including crowdsourcing format, expertise, message efficacy, and feasibility.

Our findings have substantial potential to be applied in public health so that future

crowdsourcing campaigns will engage the publics to exercise in a fun and socially responsible way. We demonstrate the effectiveness of crowdsourcing CSR campaigns.

**2. Internal Communication and Employee Activism: Perspectives from the Field**

*Arunima Krishna, Raymond L. Kotcher, & Donald K. Wright, Boston University*

Recent years have seen instances of employees giving voice to their displeasure over organizational action that they deem to be against their own or the organization's values. This study seeks to understand how PR practitioners use internal communication and employee engagement strategies to address, encourage, and/or manage such employee activism.

First, this study served to underscore the importance of organizational listening as a key component of internal communication, especially when addressing employee activism. Failure to listen and understand employee concerns and sentiment may lead to the escalation of employee activism from internal to external, as was seen in the case of Hootsuite, Wayfair, Amazon, and numerous others. Second, the present study emphasized the crucial role played by employee resource groups (ERGs) in internal communication and employee activism.

**3. CSR Stakeholder Engagement in A Post-Pandemic World: Insights from CSR Practitioner Interviews**

*Sun Young Lee, Olivia Truban, & Drew T. Ashby-King, University of Maryland-College Park*

The purpose of the present study was to examine the impacts of the pandemic and of the racial justice movements of 2020 on companies' CSR practices. Interviews with CSR practitioners suggest opportunities and the future trajectory of CSR practices that these events have created.

The present study will illuminate a more in-depth understanding of how CSR practices are intertwined with the global crisis and social justice movements and may allow us to trace the trajectory of the future role of companies in our society.

**4. The Impact of RADIO on Negative Megaphoning/Echoing Mediated by Conspiracy Orientation and Conspiracy Attribution**

*SunHa Yeo, HyeLim Lee, James Hollenczer, & Jeong-Nam Kim, University of Oklahoma*

This study seeks to explore the mediated effect of conspiracy orientation and conspiracy attribution on the association between the country-foreign public relationship (RADIO) and negative communication behavior (megaphoning and echoing). In addition, it examines the moderating effect of ethical orientation of foreign publics between RADIO and negative communication behavior.

It is expected that this study finds that relationship-building between a country and its foreign public (RADIO) diminishes conspiracy orientation and conspiracy attribution of foreign publics regarding a country that generates less negative megaphoning or echoing among foreign publics. Furthermore, the practical implication would be informing governmental officials of the importance of continuous relationship-building with foreign publics.

5. **To Leave or Stay During the COVID-19 Crisis: Exploring the Impacts of CSR Motives, Distrust, and Crisis Controllability on Employee Turnover Intentions**

*Chuqing Dong, Michigan State University, Yang Alice Cheng, North Carolina State University, & Yuan Wang, City University of Hong Kong, China*

This study examines employees' turnover intentions as a function of corporate social responsibility (CSR) motives during the COVID-19 pandemic, with distrust and crisis controllability being the psychological mechanisms. Results show that intrinsic CSR facilitates distrust, whereas extrinsic CSR reduces distrust. Distrust increases turnover intentions through the mediator of crisis controllability.

Faced with significant uncertainty and stress, organizations should avoid egoistic CSR initiatives to decrease employee turnover. In addition, we found that the translation of organizational CSR initiatives to employees' own risk judgment can become an important driver for their turnover intentions. Finally, this study underlines the significance of careful CSR program design during a crisis to avoid unforeseen negative effects on employees' risk perceptions and willingness to leave their organization.

6. **Combating Misinformation: Understanding Social Media User Perceptions of Responsibility**

*Jensen Moore & Elizabeth Cox, University of Oklahoma*

This Q-study aims to uncover public perceptions of how COVID-19 misinformation on social media should be managed by users, governments, experts, and social media platforms, and the perceived importance of media literacy and censorship. The findings offer insights to public relations practitioners to meet stakeholder expectations in combating misinformation.

This Q-study fits within this year's conference theme as it aims to offer insight to public relations practitioners as they work to meet stakeholder expectations in combating misinformation on social media. The findings have implications to all practitioners encountering misinformation, but they are specifically helpful to those employed by governments, health and research institutions, and social media platforms in understanding their role in managing misinformation from a social media user's perspective.

**LUNCH BREAK Noon to 1:30 p.m.**

## Session 4

1:30–2:30 p.m.

Grace Ji, Presiding

1. **“I Check My Ego at the Door”: Exploring Ethical Listening Among Public Relations Professionals**

*Katie Place, Quinnipiac University*

***Baylor University Department of Journalism, Public Relations & New Media  
Top Ethics Award***

Current U.S. organizations lack the capacity to listen effectively, provide listening training, reduce barriers to ethical listening, and implement changes. The purpose of this study was to explore how PR professionals engage in ethical listening. Findings suggest that ethical listening incorporates dignity and respect, empathy, inclusivity, accountability, and humility.

Research has called for increased understanding of ethical listening in public relations and cited a lack of training and competency with regard to the practice. This study found that public relations professionals engage in ethical listening by enacting forms of respect, empathy, inclusivity, and especially humility. Findings confirm the need for practical values-based training, as well as accountability tools and protocols to help PR pros listen ethically.

2. **Value-Driven Relationship Management: Exploring the Contingent Organization-Public Relationships (COPR) During a Paracrisis Duo**

*Feifei Chen, College of Charleston, & Yang Cheng, North Carolina State University*

***Peter Debreceeny Corporate Communication Award***

Navigating polarizing socio-political issues is a growing concern in the practice along with increased pressure to engage in corporate social advocacy. Polarization makes CSA decisions more complicated by intensifying conflict. We use the Rhetorical Arena Theory (RAT) to guide the use of CSR in a polarized environment. We note building tolerance should be a part of CSA as it counters polarization. Values promotion is offered one option for promoting tolerance and lessening polarization.

This study advances the contingency theory (cf. Cancel et al., 1997; 1999) research by extending its scope into the relationship management of an understudied form of crisis risk. Through a COPR perspective, it also enriches risk and crisis management regarding controversial issues by revealing the relationship modes between organizations and multiple publics and the contingency factors affecting the relationships.

3. **“Give To the Poor”: Examining Publics’ Dissenting Views on A Religious Organization’s Corporate Social Responsibility Project**

*Delight Jessica Agboada & Faith Afua Otchere, University of Maryland-College Park*

Using thematic analysis, we examined the dissenting views publics expressed on a religious organization’s corporate social responsibility project. We found that publics’

views were centered on the perceived misplaced priorities of the religious organization, the state's failure to meet the needs of citizens and the gullibility of religious people.

This study provides insight into the increasing need for PR scholars to interrogate and theorize publics' dissent and its impact on organization-public relationships, particularly within a dynamic media environment like social media. Practically, this paper adds to the growing evidence that social media fuels publics' agency and expression, therefore organizations, particularly those in developing countries, should consider innovative and strategic ways to engage with dissenting publics.

#### 4. **Application And Acceptance of AI-Based Tools in Corporate Communication**

*Karolin Kelm & Michael Johann, University of Leipzig, Germany*

The study explores the conditions for the application and acceptance of AI-based tools in corporate communication. Qualitative interviews with AI experts reveal that factors both on the micro (e.g., trust, demographics) and the meso level (e.g., ethical guidelines, organizational awareness) shape the acceptance of AI in communication departments.

This research is one of the first in-depth explorations of factors driving the acceptance of AI in corporate communication. Its impact on the profession mainly refers to (1) various strategic opportunities in nurturing the acceptance of AI in communication departments, (2) the identification of unused potential of AI in corporate communication, and (3) reflections on the changing roles of future communication professionals.

#### 5. **The Public's Response to a Crisis on Twitter: An Application of the Symbolic Convergence Theory**

*Charles W. Meadows & Cui Meadows, East Carolina University*

This study implemented the SCT on the public's response of a crisis. The study analyzed tweets following the sentence of Larry Nassar. The findings offer an alternative lens to understand how the public constructs meaning from a major crisis and how individual attributes can play a role.

An important implication for organizational crisis response is to closely monitor public opinion on social media to identify the implicit themes. The findings of this paper offer an alternative lens to understand how the public constructs meaning from a major crisis and how individual attributes can play a role in this process.

#### 6. **Public Relations in Africa: The Emerging Role of Social Media in Kenya**

*Dane Kiambi, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Prisca S. Ngondo, Texas State University, & Anna Klyueva, University of Houston-Clear Lake*

This study with PR practitioners in Kenya produced three findings: Social media is an effective tool for advocating for the interests of all stakeholders, not just corporate interests; social media is valuable in helping build trust with stakeholders; practitioners value social media for its role in campaign monitoring and evaluation.

This study contributes to scholarship by addressing the fundamental roles of public relations as they relate to social media: advocacy, relationship/trust building, reputation and issues management, and monitoring and evaluation. This study also addresses the need for more diverse, equitable, and inclusive scholarship within public relations in

advancing knowledge on the use of social media by PR practitioners in Kenya, a prime case study in sub-Saharan Africa.

## Session 5

2:45—3:45 p.m.

Fay Chen, Presiding

1. **Conceptual Evolution of Crisis Communication Research: Mapping the Semantic Evolution of Concepts in the Crisis Communication Research Using Leximancer**

*Hyunji (Dana) Lim, Alma College, & Young Kim, Marquette University*

By using Leximancer, this study conducted a semantic analysis of crisis communication research (1,019 articles). Research visualized the research status of crisis communication and provided mapping about how themes and topics of crisis communication research have changed from 1963 to 2022 and differ across the academic journals.

By conducting a semantic analysis of 1,019 crisis communication articles using Leximancer, this study provided mapping about how themes and topics of crisis communication research have changed from 1963 to 2022 and differ across the academic journals. This study paves the way for an innovative method that enhance the rigor of the research process and improves practitioners' understanding of the status of crisis communication.

2. **Message Frames and Corporate Social Advocacy: Menstrual and Fertility Tracking Applications Organizational Messaging Post Roe V. Wade Overturn**

*Folasewa Olatunde & Tugce Ertem-Eray, North Carolina State University*

This study analyzes the message frames and strategies employed by menstrual and fertility tracking applications to connect with their publics post Roe v. Wade overturn. Results reveal that macro legislative alignment, user agency and duty frames were used, but scare information on data and privacy actions were provided.

This study provides empirical evidence for how organizations manage dual public relations needs of corporate social advocacy and issue management using message frames and strategies for their communication materials. For future case, PR practitioners will benefit from research result and recommended message framing model.

3. **Beyond Advocacy: Vaccine Mandate Against Misinformation Era**

*Grace (EunHae) Park, Ball State University, & SeoYeon Kim, University of Alabama*

This study aims to investigate effective vaccine advocacy strategies for universities to fight against in the era of false information about vaccines. To do so, a 2 (message type: Inoculation vs. supportive) x 2 (message source: President vs. Government official) x 2 (public type: students vs. parents) between subject experiment will be conducted.

This study has practical implications in that 1) the study outcomes will help higher education institutes prepare effective communication strategies despite false information about vaccines. Also, it will provide guidelines for developing tailored messages for each target group. Theoretically, this study contributes to the extension of inoculation theory to strategic communication in the field of health crisis.

4. **Designing Social Media Messages to Promote Action by Suicide Gatekeepers**

*Megan Cox, University of Oklahoma*

Suicide prevention professionals have focused on reaching family, friends, and other acquaintances, referred to as suicide gatekeepers. This research examines and tests the most effective message framing and wording of social media messages for positively influencing suicide gatekeeper intervention behavior on behalf of a friend or peer.

This research will directly impact communication professionals in mental health and suicide prevention organizations, in addition to other wellness organizations, for designing effective social media messages for influencing message effectiveness and behavior.

5. **Stealing Thunder and the Incentive to Do Critical Reporting**

*Mikkel Christensen & Molly Wilkins, Georgia College & State University*

This paper looks at organizations using the crisis communication strategy of stealing thunder by volunteering negative information broadly to the public. In the cases, it's not only done to get ahead stories, but also intentionally to dissuade journalists to commit resources to critical reporting in the future.

This research adds to the literature on the relationships between PR professionals and reporters. This is done by examining how an extension of the stealing thunder strategy is used to dissuade critical reporting, by recognizing negative stories as a commodity. The cases studied take place in Denmark, but despite significant differences in both the PR and media landscape, they are still relevant for PR professionals in North America.

6. **Nikki Minaj Tweets COVID-19 Vaccine: Examining Public and bots Responses to Celebrity Rumors**

*Sushma Kumble, Towson University, Pratiti Diddi, George Mason University, & Steve Bien-Aime, Northern Kentucky University*

Rap star Nicki Minaj created outrage after tweeting an outlandish rumor about the COVID-19 vaccine. This study analyzed responses to Minaj's tweet through unsupervised machine learning and bot analysis. Results indicate many responses to her tweet, including several bot-like accounts, attempted to correct the misinformation.

The problem of infodemic is only growing and is a major challenge for health communication. PR practitioner in health now must determine how to collaborate with the celebrities in order to both spread prosocial messages and combat misinformation on social media platforms. The larger question that the findings ponder is if bots can be employed for prosocial behavior. Further research needs to examine how this can be done ethically by PR practitioners.

**Session 6**

**4:00-5:00 p.m.**

**Ansgar Zerfass, Presiding**

1. **Preparing the Future PR Practitioner: Post-Pandemic Expectations and The Role of Student-Run Agencies**

*Michelle Morris & Debbie Davis, Texas Tech University*

Faculty who teach university-level experiential learning courses or student-run public

relations agencies must adapt the quickest to industry trends. Unexpected changes post pandemic have challenged aspiring PR practitioners to prepare for the evolving industry. This research seeks to understand employer expectations as students prepare to fulfill communications-related roles.

As the post-pandemic workplace evolves, so does student preparation for them. The research aims to bridge the gap between experiential learning courses for students and employer expectations of student skills. With a more current understanding of employer expectations (hard skills and soft skills), student-run agencies can reassess their curriculum post-pandemic and provide a modernized experience for students.

2. **Investigating Corporate Social Advocacy (CSA) Action Through the Lens of Corporate Responsibility to Race (CRR)**

*Ziyuan Zhou, Bentley University*

The ability to demonstrate authenticity is key to corporate social advocacy (CSA) communication. This study compared four types of prosocial practices: statement-only CSA, internal CSA, external CSA, and internal and external CSA. The findings suggested that internal and external CSA led to a stronger perception of authenticity.

Corporate social advocacy is one of the most popular topics in public relations research. However, taking a stand on controversial issues goes beyond a simple statement. Corporations need to match their prosocial statements with prosocial actions. This study investigates the

3. **The Impact of Art Sponsorship on Consumer Attitudes: Measuring Mutual Spillover Effects with Perceived Prestige and Involvement**

*Yasushi Sonobe, Toyo University, Japan; & Makiko Kawakita, Nanzan University, Japan*

This study aims to clarify the mechanism by which art sponsorship influences consumer attitudes. We propose hypotheses and show a research method to examine consumers' perceived prestige of both the corporate brand and the art organization, as well as their involvement in both categories of the product and the art.

The result of this research will clarify following causal relationships. First, perceived prestige can be effective indicator of marketing public relations with art sponsorship. Second, it will show the significance of paying attention to the extent of consumers' involvement in both the product and the art category as moderator variables effecting on these causal relationships, then it will be applied to corporate philanthropy as well as to arts sponsorship.

4. **Aberje and Valor Setorial Comunicação Corporativa: Legitimation Narratives of the Professional Field**

*Paulo Nassar & Victor Pereira, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil*

The Valor Setorial Corporate Communication recorded important aspects of the professional field. This research studies its contribution to a field narrative and analyzes what are the themes of the magazine's round tables. The categorical content analysis methodology, with the aid of the software, reveals a structure of themes.

The analysis of the results reveal a structure of general themes dealt by the roundtables: networks and social media; organizational and sectoral structure; relationship; communication management issues; and transitions & transformations. In

addition, the presence of organizations legitimation themes are verified in the speeches of corporate communication professionals, with a predominance of narratives of compatibility.

5. **Relational, Elaborational, or Activational? A Content Analysis of Communication Strategies in Corporate Social Advocacy on Social Media**

*Duli Shi, New Mexico State University*

A quantitative content analysis study was conducted to explore the existing communication strategies (relational vs. elaborational vs. activational) used in CSA communication on Facebook and Twitter. The most commonly used communication strategy (elaborational) did not appear to be the most effective one (relational) in facilitating publics' social media engagement.

This study is the first to apply relational, elaborational, and activational communication strategies in the CSA context, which pointed out the potential of communication in building explanatory links or semantic associations for companies' advocacy efforts. Companies are recommended to fully exploit the features of social media platforms and create more interactive content to effectively facilitate public participation in companies' CSA initiatives.

6. **A Matter of Trust: Understanding the Impact of Trust-Driving Attributes in Three Major American Companies in Media and Public Perceptions**

*Angela Dwyer, Fullintel, & Tyler Page, University of Connecticut*

***Arthur W. Page Center Benchmarking Award***

This mixed-method analysis examines trust in three major American companies through a content analysis and a survey of a nationally representative sample. Results show trustworthiness has a large effect on reputation and a small effect on purchase intentions with benevolence being the most important attribute to purchase intentions.

Trust is the currency of relationships and as such a primary focus for public relations leaders seeking to improve financial results through purchase and reputation. This research study reveals that organizations should focus on building perceived benevolence in order to increase purchase intentions, while emphasizing ability and integrity to improve organizational reputation. The findings add to the current knowledge of trust and confirm that building trust is a long-term endeavor that can pay big dividends.

**5:00 to ?? Dinner on your own.**



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Friday, March 3, 2023

Breakfast 7:00—8:00 a.m.

7:30 a.m. Registration

### Session 7

8:30—9:30 a.m.

Stacey Smith, Presiding

1. **How Startups Communicate Leadership on Twitter and LinkedIn**

*Michael Johan & Cornelia Wolf, University of Leipzig, Germany*

The study examines startup leadership communication on Twitter and LinkedIn. Drawing on a quantitative content analysis of the Global Unicorn Club, the study particularly sheds light on the question of how startups employ leadership communication styles, areas of startup leadership, and leadership qualities in their posts on Twitter and LinkedIn.

With a focus on the global startup market, this research serves as a benchmark in the field for both research and practice. Based on the results, the study has the potential to impact the profession by providing evidence that especially LinkedIn is an effective platform for startup leadership storytelling. Moreover, with its focus on unicorn startups, the study not only presents the status quo of startup communication on social media but also reveals best practices.

2. **The Potential Crisis That Didn't Develop: A Case Study and Comparison**

*Mikkel Christensen, Georgia College & State University*

This case study looks at a potential crisis that was managed and communicated well, so it didn't develop into a full-blown crisis. A comparison is made to a similar situation at another university in the same city a few years earlier, that ended up in a full-blown crisis with long-lasting impact to the university.

Too often we as crisis communicators study crises based on their outcomes, as we tend to study those that receive the most attention. However, this is a look at a potential crisis that had the elements to develop, but it did not. The crisis management depicted in the case study reflect a lot of strong lessons for all communicators.

3. **Bottom-Up CSA, Exploring the Effects of Employee Engagement and Perceived Organizational Justice on CSA Legitimacy**

*Chris Yim, Loyola University Chicago*

Employees no longer passively await corporate advocacy decisions from the executive suite. Instead, they speak out for or against their employers on controversial societal issues. In contrast with the dominant top-down CSA interpretation, this study investigates whether the bottom-up CSA approach can enhance the public legitimacy of a CSA initiative.

Corporate social advocacy does not just happen by accident. When companies incorporate polyphonic employee voices to uphold a particular corporate value, it accounts for organizational justice. Not embracing the powerful employee advocates, companies may risk missing out on an essential group of supporters. By mobilizing

advocates who are already taking matters into their own hands, companies could empower their employees to lead internal support to CSA and transform their organizations in the most authentic light.

4. **Using Sustained Dialogue to Foster Intercultural Development and Growth Before, During and After Education Abroad Programs**

*Teresa Mastin & Judy Walgren, Michigan State University*

This study addresses how education abroad programs can recruit interculturally, diverse students and implement practices and processes that facilitate the creation of a safe space for students to explore their identities, beliefs and (implicit) biases, which will ultimately lead to a more diversified, representative public relations profession.

The PR profession continues to lack diversity. In this study we outline how we developed a study abroad program that enabled students to move beyond surface understanding of one another. Students flourished in the safe space, built on a foundation of sustained dialogue and reflective essays. They explored their identities, beliefs and (implicit) biases while also ensuring that their interculturally diverse backgrounds didn't detract from the stated learning goals, the program objectives or in-country experiences.

5. **Contextualizing Crisis Communication: A Systematic Review of Chinese Crisis Communication Research in English and Chinese**

*Yumin Yan & Brooke Fisher Liu, University of Maryland-College Park*

This paper comprehensively reviews empirical, peer-reviewed journal articles on Chinese crisis communication in English (n = 156) and in Chinese (n = 167), ranging from 2003 to 2022, and reveals existing research trends in the Chinese crisis communication literature in terms of topics and theoretical frameworks.

The results provide the first insights into the vibrant Chinese crisis communication research in Chinese, compared to in English. We discuss additional findings, gaps in the research record, opportunities for further theorizing, and implications for crises that affect Chinese publics and organizations.

6. **PR on Corporate Boards**

*Tim Penning, Grand Valley State University*

Corporations and their boards today are more concerned than ever before with social and reputation issues, as much or more than financial concerns. At the same time, public relations scholars and professionals have been much involved with corporate social responsibility (CSR) and other social and organization-public relationship (OPR) considerations. Given this, it would make sense that corporate boards would welcome public relations expertise and abilities--or PR "capacity"--among their members. However, an examination of the Fortune Modern Board 25 list of highly rated corporate boards shows little evidence of board committees dedicated to public relations activity, and even less of board members with public relations degrees or experience. This reality is discussed in terms of being a slight on the profession or an opportunity to have a seat at the most significant table--the corporate board.

Public relations as a profession has long sought to be properly understood as a function, and as such, to be welcomed as part of the management of organizations. This

has often been called the “dominant coalition.’ But that coalition often includes members of the C-suite--top executives in various professions. While the role of the CCO--chief communication officer--is on the rise, the time has come for public relations to be not only recognized but embedded in the members of corporate boards. Current members of boards have expertise in finance, engineering, law and other fields, but public relations needs to be recognized as equally contributing to leadership of modern corporations at the highest level.

## **Session 8**

**9:45—10:45 a.m.**

**Denise Bortree, Presiding:**

- 1. Long-Term Effects of Cancel Culture on Brand Perception: An Analysis of Gen Z Perceptions of Brands and Controversial Advertisements**

*Amanda Withrow & Amanda Coleman, University of Oklahoma*

***University of Miami School of Communication Top Student Paper Award***

Cancel culture is a recent phenomenon increasing in societal prevalence. There is limited research about how cancel culture can affect brands and individuals in the long-term. To fill this gap, this study aims to explore how cancel culture affects members of Generation Z’s perception of brands.

Findings will show how consumers continue to treat and perceive brands that may have offended them in the past, and how they approach the perpetrators now. This study gives brands and strategic communicators insight into what offenses have prompted Generation Z consumers to boycott a brand in recent years. These insights will allow professionals to understand how to best communicate with audiences about difficult topics.

- 2. How Whistleblowing and Personal Involvement Affect the Effectiveness of Crisis Response Strategies**

*Liang (Lindsay) Ma, Texas Christian University*

This study examines the effects of whistleblowing on customers’ reactions to corporate ethical misconduct and corporate response strategies, and whether such effects disappear when the misconduct benefits customers indirectly. A total of 1,026 usable questionnaires were collected in an online experiment.

First, many ethical misconducts are called out by whistleblowers, and this study explores how whistleblowing affects consumers’ reactions to corporate misconduct and how companies can effectively respond to such a crisis. Additionally, some corporate ethical misconducts may not harm the customers per se or even benefit them in certain ways. This study helps us understand why customers respond more negatively to some ethical misconducts but not to others, and whether such difference is related to their own benefits.

3. **Helpful or Harmful? The Role of Gender Stereotypes in Organizational Crisis Response**  
*Sining Kong, Michelle Mares-Fuehrer, & Shane Gleason, Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi*

This study aims to examine how gender stereotypes influence the public's perceptions of crisis response messages. A 2 (industry type: automotive vs. daycare industry) X 2 (spokesperson's sex: male vs. female) X 2 (crisis response appeal: rational vs. emotional) between-subject experimental design was conducted to test the hypotheses.

This study enriches current crisis communication research by recognizing how a non-cognitive factor—gender stereotypes—implicitly influences people's perceptions of crisis response. According to the results, practitioners should match a spokesperson's sex with a sex differed industry for enhancing organizational reputation and spokesperson's credibility because of gender schemas. Moreover, practitioners should match rational crisis response frames to male associated industries to generate more favorable behavioral intention. Aside from matching effect, practitioners can also exploit the merit of mismatching strategy in female associated industries via positive expectancy violations of male related gender stereotypes. Moreover, despite industry type, practitioners should either select a less attractive female spokesperson or a more attractive male spokesperson to reduce public's attribution of crisis responsibility.

4. **The Medium Is the Message: Testing the Effect of Corporate Social Advocacy (CSA) Messages and Call-To-Action Statements on Advocating Behavioral Intentions**  
*Holly Overton, Pennsylvania State University, Michail Vafeiadis, Auburn University, Nandini Bhalla, Texas State University, & Christen Buckley, Pennsylvania State University*

This study examines CSA message content effects on advocacy behavioral intentions through a 2 (message type: narrative vs. informational) x 2 (level of advocacy: call to action vs. no call to action) experimental design. Results will help companies navigate how strongly CSA messages should advocate for action while minimizing polarization.

This study aims to offer significant implications for the profession, specifically regarding what type of information companies should include in CSA messages and how strongly the messages should advocate for action. This will aid companies in tackling what is considered to be both a challenge and an opportunity: taking a stand and inspiring change while also refraining from further polarizing an already polarized society.

5. **What Happens in Vegas Should Not Stay in Vegas: Sharing City Stories of Resilience and Collaboration Through Owned Media**

*Kevin Stoker & Aya Shata, University of Nevada Las Vegas*

Using the City of Las Vegas as a case study, this research taps into the power of strategic storytelling as the City's approach to public relations to develop human connections critical to organizational success. It involves identifying key messages communicated through stories of people who embody the values of city.

This is exploratory research that can make an important contribution to the public relations body of knowledge, especially in regards to strategic communication in the public sector. Communication that advances an organization's mission, goals and values is considered strategic. Strategic communication is purposeful communication. For the purpose of public relations, however, communicating the mission, goals, and values of

the organization does not develop the kind of human connections critical to organizational success. Providing a list of government services or filling the website with statistics, charts and graphs may do a good job of informing but it fails at connecting and ultimately persuading the public to interact and engage with an organization. In the public sector, human connections are especially important because governments and municipalities depend on public support. Public officials work for the public and therefore must communicate that their efforts and initiatives indeed serve the public and improve the life of their constituents. Most cities, however, try to accomplish this task by simply supplying the public with information without any evidence of how it actually accomplishes the mission of serving the public interest. Using the City of Las Vegas as a test case, this research taps into the power of strategic storytelling. This kind of storytelling involves identifying key messages—in the case of the City of Las Vegas, those messages include resilience, collaboration, innovation, and empathy. These messages are then communicated through stories of citizens, city workers, and city partners who embody the mission, goals, and values of the city. Storytelling is intrinsically persuasive. They communicate normative values and inspire deeper message processing. And most important, people remember the cause and effects of stories and tend to share them with others.

**6. Public Relations in Law Enforcement: A Discourse Analysis on the Professional Skills and Academic Backgrounds of Specialized Practitioners**

*Meta G. Carstarphen & Margarita H. Tapia, University of Oklahoma*

Through a discourse analysis of law enforcement organization public information officer job postings aims to provide insight into what academic and public relations backgrounds are sought for those positions and to examine the impact of technology and social media in the profession.

Through a discourse analysis of law enforcement organization public relations job postings, this study aims to provide insight into what backgrounds are sought and to examine the impact of technology and social media. This project may shed some light on positive and negative public relations case studies involving LEOs. In addition to contributing to the body of knowledge on this topic, it may offer insight into effective hiring practices for public relations professionals. This study demystifies quality in communication consulting (an intangible and interactive service) by identifying the levels and characteristics of quality in the field. It helps leaders in communications departments justify and evaluate spending on external consulting. It also enables agencies and consulting firms to gain competitive advantage by mitigating conflicts and focusing on aspects of quality that really matter. The study's international focus makes it particularly relevant for strategic communication practitioners working across borders.

## Session 9

11:00—Noon

Tim Irish, Presiding

1. **Regulating The Virtual Domain: How the Saudi Government and Twitter Users Address Their Concern of Content Violations**

*Entesar Albarakati, Virginia Commonwealth University, & Osama Albishri, Kign Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia*

This study analyses the Saudi government's communication regarding the regulations of social media content, how the government responds to the violations of those regulations, and how social media users perceive such practices by the government. The findings will be based on the analysis of 15,100 tweets.

From a public relations perspective, it is not clear yet how the Saudi government communicates and follows up on those policies in social media and how social media users respond to those policies. Moreover, there have been cases where the Saudi government has taken certain measures against the influencers who violated the new regulations, but the scope of those measures has not been scholarly investigated nor how the social media users feel toward such measures. Therefore, this paper will investigate these cases.

2. **Managing Consumer Expectations Online: A Values-Driven and Strategic Issues Management Approach to Organizational Legitimacy**

*John Brummette, Radford University, Lynn M. Zoch, Radford University; Hilary Fussell Sisco, Quinnipiac University; Mercedes Loescher, Peyton Mills, Radford University*

This study used content, social network, and semantic network analysis to explore a new form of organizational institutionalization enacted by constituents placing online pressures on organizations through positive and negative social media mentions. Findings from this study identify the most critical concerns the modern constituent has for legitimate organizations.

Practitioners and organizations can use findings from this study to identify and prioritize the value-driven expectations and behaviors required by their constituents. The study also presents some novel methods that practitioners can use to make sense of large online datasets.

3. **Confronting Controversial Content: Examining Collective and Connective Action Frames in #Cancelspotify and #Netflixwalkout**

*Chelsea Woods & Brandi Watkins, Virginia Technological University*

Hashtag activism permits activists to build networks and craft counter(narratives) as they seek to shape audience interpretations, thereby gaining support for their issues. Using #CancelSpotify and #NetflixWalkout, this study analyzes collective and connective action frames, specifically examining how individuals discussed the events and engaged with frames.

Social media gives activists direct avenues through which they can challenge corporate practices. This study examines connective and collective action frames and their effectiveness during #CancelSpotify and #NetflixWalkout. Along with analyzing how social media users framed the debates involving controversial creative content, we also

evaluate which frames resonated most with audiences. The study offers implications for activists and PR practitioners, who must be prepared to respond when confronted with these difficult topics.

**4. The Positive Spillover Effects of Response to Another Charity's Crisis**

*Bugil Chang & Heyjoon Rom, University of Minnesota*

Suggesting three types of response strategies, this study investigated if an innocent charity's response to the crisis elicits positive impacts on the responded charity and charities in general. The findings provide practical advice to PR managers to actively respond to another charity's crisis to restore the deteriorated trust.

Suggesting three types of response strategies, this study investigated if an innocent charity's response to the crisis leads to positive impacts on both the responded charity and charities in general. The findings provide a practical guideline to charities and their PR managers that they should actively respond to another charity's crisis using indirect differentiation and bolstering strategies to restore the deteriorated trust toward both the responded charity and charities in general at the pre-crisis level.

**5. Applying Situational Theory of Problem Solving In COVID-19 Behavioral Intentions: An Examination of Vaccine Hesitancy**

*Linda Dam, University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Utilizing STOPS framework to understand the factors impacting individuals to engage in health communication behaviors, the study explores how public perceptions regarding COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy will impact communicative actions of COVID-19 behavioral intentions. Specifically, the study seeks to understand how individuals acquire, share, and filter information regarding COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy.

This study aims to enhance the generalizability and advancement of the situational theory by using STOPS in a health context. Findings have practical implications for healthcare experts to better serve the publics' need in health information seeking behavior.

**6. I Know How I Know: The Role of Metacognition in Public Relations Practice**

*Yusuke Ibuki, Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan*

PR practitioners working for PR agencies are faced with new tasks every day. However, there are some practitioners who consistently produce good results. Why and how are they able to continuously achieve superior results? To answer this, we are conducting in-depth interviews on metacognition PR practitioners may have.

The results of this study must include how important metacognition is for PR practitioners, how to acquire it, and how to apply it to the new and different tasks that PR practitioners are faced with every day. So, we can show the implication for the management team of PR agencies and practitioners themselves on how to achieve excellent results continuously.

**LUNCH BREAK Noon to 1:30 p.m.**

## Session 10

1:30—2:30 p.m.

Tim Coombs, Presiding

1. **What Employees Tell After Work: Predicting the Employees' Behaviors by the Intelligent Modeling of the Digital Data**

*Hyelim Lee, Jeong-Nam Kim, University of Oklahoma; Jang Yun, Na Young Koo, Chanyoung Jung, Hyein Hong, Sanbong Yao, Sejong University, South Korea; Jimmy Hollenczer & Sunha Yeo, University of Oklahoma*

The study proposes the intelligence modeling of the employees' digital voices to build the predictive model about the employees' perceived relationship with the organizations. The study also aims to examine the causal relationship between the employee-organization relationship and the organizations' efforts to cultivate the relationship with the employees.

The data-driven approach of machine learning or artificial intelligence is often criticized for the lack of theories. This integration of the established theories from PR and the AI/ML method can allow us to understand the employees' behaviors better and accurately predict the consequences of organizations' strategic relationship building or cultivating endeavors.

2. **Neither "Hustle Culture" nor "Quiet Quitting" But to Build a Win-win Work Culture: Exploring and Measuring Individual and Social-level Factors to Predict Work Behavioral Intentions of PR professionals**

*Jungyun Won, Kyung-Hyan (Angie) Yoo, & Lorra M. Brown, William Paterson University of New Jersey*

Applying Self-Determination Theory (SDT), this study is designed to investigate how different types of motivational factors might be related to differences in employees' work behavioral intentions in terms of job engagement and different types of work investment. In addition, this study aims to test and investigate the moderating effect of individual-level factors and social-level factors in the relationship between employees' motivation and work behavioral intentions.

The current discussion on quiet quitting is limited to identifying the causes and proposing solutions at a surface level, such as prioritizing employees' well-being, having open communication, and giving employees more power. However, the empirical research results from this study can provide practical guidelines for the PR profession to reduce the disconnection between employers and employees and promote employee engagement and positive employee relationships based on a more profound and extensive understanding of employees (e.g., motivational, individual, and social level factors).

3. **Controlling The Narrative: A Review of Ben & Jerry's Modeling Social Corporate Advocacy, 1978–2021**

*Teresa Mastin, Hailey Kenward, & Maggie Dillon, Michigan State University*

Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream opened its doors in 1978 using an activism capitalism model, "We believe that business has a responsibility and a unique opportunity to be a powerful lever of change ...." As citizens lose faith in government, the business sector is

poised to help manage social issues.

When Ben & Jerry's announced it would operate using an activism capitalism model, the ice cream industry felt that it was only a matter of time before the company failed. However, not only is the company successful, it is known/respected for practicing caring capitalism, even after becoming a subsidiary of for-profit Unilever. Ben & Jerry's provides a model of how companies can simultaneously practice corporate social advocacy and positively impact their bottom line.

4. **Disney, DeSantis, and Don't Say Gay: The Influence of Corporate Political Advocacy on Consumer Digital Engagement and Political Consumerism**

*Kelly Page Werder, Kelli S. Burns, & Selena Gonzalez, University of South Florida*

This study examines consumer behavioral outcomes of the CPA of the Walt Disney Company regarding Florida's "Don't Say Gay" legislation. This study employs survey methods to assess consumer digital engagement and political consumerism resulting from Disney's public stance on the issue, furthering the theoretical development of the CPA construct.

Corporate involvement in social issues is increasingly prevalent but can be a difficult situation for PR practitioners to navigate when it risks alienating certain stakeholders. Corporations that take public stances on social issues are engaging in corporate political advocacy (CPA). CPA emphasizes the normative foundation of CSR, adopting a values-driven approach to achieve societal goals and advance public policy. This study examines consumer behavioral outcomes of the CPA, furthering the theoretical development of the construct.

5. **Organizational Crisis Social Networks**

*Ronald M. Girard, Towson University*

This study examined the organizational crisis resulting from the shooting of a Black man by a White police officer in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 2022. The author conducted a social network analysis of Twitter discourse to uncover patterns of influence and sentiment that occurred online following the crisis.

This research adds new insight to the field of crisis communication by combining computer science and data analytics methods with mass communication theory and strategies. By investigating the impact of a at-fault organizational crisis on an online public, and vice versa, this research addresses a gap in crisis communication literature while also providing practical implications for organizational practices in times of crisis and social turmoil.

6. **Living Harmony During Crisis: Learning Ethic of Care from Balinese Culture**

*Gregoria Arum Yudarwati, Ina Nur Ratriyana, & Meganusa Prayudi Ludvianto, Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

In extending ethics of care in crisis communication, organizations should consider culture as a context. Culture defines people, values and actions that it became embedded in their life. By introducing an Indonesian perspective of culture, this study suggests organizations to prioritize harmony among all affected parties during crisis response.

First, crisis should be seen as part of the organization's life cycle and turning point for a

better version of the organization and society. Second, in extending ethics of care in crisis communication, organizations should consider culture as a context. Third, organizations should involve local actors as good exemplars or models of care virtue in crisis communication. Lastly, the ultimate goal of crisis communication is not the organizational reputation but the harmony among all parties.

## **Session 11**

**2:45—3:45 p.m.**

**Yan Jin, Presiding**

**1. Exploring the Influence of Interactivity and Vividness in Instructing and Adjusting Information on Message Effectiveness During a Food Poisoning Crisis**

*Ziyuan Zhou, Bentley University, Xueying Zhang, North Carolina A&T University, & Eyun-Jung Ki, University of Alabama*

Mobile app is a popular communication tool nowadays. However, there are very few discussions on how organizations can use mobile apps to inform and assure publics during crises. This study tested how the two unique features of mobile apps, interactivity and vividness, could help stakeholders to protect themselves in a food poisoning crisis.

Public relations researchers have advocated for an investigation of the influence of new technology on public relations practices. This study is one of the few to respond to this call. It investigates the use of crisis mobile apps during an organization crisis. The researchers developed a mobile app to provide instructing and adjusting information in a food poisoning crisis and found that the use of visuals greatly improves people's efficacy.

**2. Does Cultural Background Influence Acceptance of Corporate Social Advocacy Campaigns? Testing Message Effectiveness Between Independent (Individualistic) and Interdependent (Collectivistic) Audiences**

*Yani Zhao, Sherice Gearhart, & Ioana Coman, Texas Tech University*

This study explores how people who perceive themselves differently as independent versus interdependent process corporate social advocacy (CSA) campaigns. A 2 x 2 x 2 between-subjects design will be used to explore how different CSA messages influence subjects' level of involvement of messages, information processing, and acceptance of CSA stance.

This study may help with corporate social advocacy (CSA) communications, particularly when addressing audiences from various cultural backgrounds. When engaging in CSA efforts, communicating with the varied public is a crucial duty for organizations, which possibly impacts the messages that the public is receptive to and inclined to interact with. The use of varying types of cultural definitions of personal involvement may allow for CSA messages to influence different publics more effectively.

3. **Applying the Typology of Disinformation-Susceptible Publics to Nation Branding: Perceptions of Latin American Countries Shaped by Americans' Views on Immigration Issues**

*Pablo Mino, Boston University, & Joseph Czabovsky, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

This study aims to contribute to the practical application of nation branding, by providing empirical data on brand recognition and brand image of eight Latin American countries among Americans. This is coupled with analysis of their views on immigration issues. Second, it pushes the theoretical argument on lacuna publics.

This study aims to contribute to the practical application of nation branding, by providing empirical data on brand recognition and brand image of eight Latin American countries among Americans: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Peru. Higher levels of brand recognition and brand image among Americans are beneficial to the nation branding goals of all these countries, although it is expected that results from this study will point out some major differences per country on these two items.

4. **Comparing Juul and Philip Morris? Response to Underage Nicotine Addiction Using Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM): A Case Study**

*Kykra Newcombe, University of Oklahoma*

The electronic cigarette company, Juul, recently reached a settlement due to its targeted advertising of harmful products to underage users. As tobacco companies have previously been penalized for similar offenses toward youth, this study compares Juul and Philip Morris' responses to their respective settlements to inform future public health messages.

The current research may help public health officials better anticipate and prepare for the fallout following the recent Juul settlement by highlighting how Juul's current advertising and marketing strategies mirror those previously used by tobacco companies like Philip Morris to rebuild and rebrand. Given that tobacco products are both highly addictive and result in long and short-term harm to users' health, findings from this study can also inform future tobacco prevention messaging.

5. **Rumors and Risk in Public Health Communication: An Empirical Study on Message Strategy and Perceived Threat**

*Zongchao Li, San Jose State University*

This project aims to examine the persuasive effectiveness of two message types, narratives, and statistical information, for both fake news and the counter real news through an online experiment. The study argues there is an interaction effect between news type, message type, and the perceived threat of the risk scenario.

The study findings will contribute to theory development and provide important practical insights on best practices of health risk communication. This study, along with the efforts of many other scholars across different fields, will help build an understanding of how (fake) information spreads online and what are the most effective communication strategies to educate the public about the public health crisis.

6. **Global Consumers? Understanding Of Corporate Advocacy: Chilean, South Korean and U.S. Perspectives**

*Seoyeon Kim, University of Alabama, Pablo Mino, Boston University, Barbara Gaither, Elon University, & Lucinda Austin, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill*

Through an international survey with 2,105 participants in three countries—Chile, South Korea, and the United States—this study examined perceived motives for corporate social advocacy (CSA) cases actual companies have recently engaged in. Chile had the highest perceived values-driven, stakeholder-driven, strategic, and egoistic motives for all CSA cases examined.

The findings suggest that U.S.-based global firms need more caution when extending their CSA messages to Chile and probably to other Latin American markets sharing similar social/economic/cultural setting with Chile. Chilean consumers seem to acknowledge positive aspects of CSA (values-driven motives) while being aware of the business side of it (e.g., strategic, egoistic motives).

**Session 12**

**4:00—5:00 p.m.**

**Holly Overton, Presiding**

1. **Fostering Relationships Away from Home: Host Country Publics' Dual Processing of MNIs' CSR Communications**

*Baobao Song, Virginia Commonwealth University*

Drawing upon the elaboration likelihood model and situational theory of publics, this study established a dual processing model of multinational enterprises' CSR communications among host country publics, which subsequently affects MNEs' public relationship building efforts. The model has theoretical and practical implications for CSR communications in the globalized business environment.

This study contributes to CSR scholarships and practices in several ways. The study goes beyond message characteristics to examine the central and peripheral attributes of CSR programs (i.e., CSR credibility, perceived CSR impact, and company country-of-origin) under the ELM framework. The model also synthesizes ELM with STP constructs to parse out the intricate cognitive processing of CSR communications. Lastly, the study provides important insights for MNEs operating in foreign countries with a strategic CSR focus.

2. **Examining Practitioners' Perceptions of Authenticity in Corporate Social Responsibility Communication**

*Olivia Truban, Drew T. Ashby-King, & Sun Young Lee, University of Maryland-College Park*

The present study examines how CSR practitioners view the role of authenticity in companies' CSR practices. Initial findings suggest parallels between authenticity and value theory. The findings inform our proposed theory of internal value alignment, a theoretical framework that CSR practitioners can use to integrate authenticity into company responses.

The present study will illuminate a more in-depth understanding of how CSR

practitioners view the role of authenticity in companies' CSR practices and how the pandemic and social justice movements have affected those perceptions. The insights may allow us to trace the trajectory of the future role of companies in our society and provide insights on directions of future CSR strategies.

3. **Exploring the Effects of Accepting Responsibility and Stealing Thunder Following an Extreme Crisis**

*Elina R. Tachkova, Hong Kong Baptist University, China, W. Timothy Coombs, Centre for Crisis and Risk Communications, & Tomasz Rediuk*

The paper employs experimental design to test the effectiveness of accepting responsibility and stealing thunder following an extreme crisis. The study uses a scansis scenario to explore whether stealing thunder could be an effective crisis response strategy for managing extreme crises.

In today's polarized society extreme crises that generate moral outrage are more common than ever. Managers need to know what to say and when to say it. Accommodative crisis responses have been ineffective in extreme crises but stealing thunder could prove to be helpful. By testing stealing thunder as a response strategy to manage extreme crises and moral outrage, the study provides empirical evidence to guide crisis managers in their communication efforts.

4. **Tracing a Political Astroturf Attack and Its Effectiveness: Critical Race Theory and The Attack on The U.S. Public Education System**

*Leslie Rasmussen, Xavier University*

The project will deconstruct a nationally led astroturf attack on public schools in the United States, and to provide practical strategies for managing and mitigating organizational damage. More specifically, it will examine the nationwide attack on public education, centered around Critical Race Theory (CRT) and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, that sent school districts across the country into crisis mode.

While the project is centered around public education, findings and implications are relevant for most industries and organizations facing astroturf attacks, and those managing misinformation and fabrications levied against organizations. Organizations are struggling, and research and strategies are needed.

5. **The Impact of the CSR Message Type on Corporate Image: A Cross-Cultural Investigation**

*Hansen Li, Erin Ash, Virginia S. Harrison, & Brandon Boatwright, Clemson University*

Research suggests the relationship between CSR and corporate image; however, few scholars have examined the impact of the type of CSR messages on corporate image. This research examines how internal and external CSR influence consumers' perceptions of corporate image in a cross-cultural context, which adds to the body of literature.

The practical implications of this study provide potential insights to public relations practitioners who want to utilize CSR strategies to advance corporate image in cross-cultural business as well as increase the overall understanding of CSR practices amongst two dominant cultural orientations of the world. Furthermore, this study and its findings can inspire and inform global companies to develop cultural-specific messages of CSR to enhance their corporate image in international markets.

## 6. **New Perspectives on Crisis History**

*Wouter Jong, Leiden University, Netherlands*

For the 2023 session of IPRCC, I propose to present findings of two of my most recent studies on crisis history. The studies were based on two crashes with the new Boeing 737-Max and Volkswagen's dieseldate crisis and present further insights in the concept of crisis history.

It deepens the insights on crisis history as the impact of future crises is not only influenced by earlier crises by the same organization, but also by crises at others within the industry. Also, organizations should be aware that a second crisis might lead to a reinterpretation of the first crisis, something which is not mentioned in literature before.

**IPRRC 26th Social 6:00—8:00 p.m.**

**SATURDAY, March 5, 2022**

**Breakfast 7:00—8:00 a.m.**

**Session #13**

**8:30—9:30 a.m.**

**Katie D. Paine, Presiding**

**1. A Study of Corporate Social Advocacy Strategies and Internal Communications for Employees with Invisible Illnesses**

*Peter Yanefski, Rowan University*

By using a mixed method of interviews and content analysis this study seeks to analyze existing communication surrounding disability accommodation and suggest ways it can be improved.

Literature in public relations and internal communication addresses the importance of internal support for corporate social advocacy (for example, organizational commitment for social advocacy issues such as employee discrimination and diversity and gender equality, etc.) on employees' positive outcomes. There is no doubt that leaders' or organizational facilitation of employee well-being and equality strongly influence employees' advocacy for their organization and more proficiencies.

**2. Toward an Authentic Corporate Social Advocacy (CSA) on Race: An Internal Perspective**

*Yeunjae Lee, Jo-Yun Li, & Weiting Tao, University of Miami*

This study examines how employees' experiences at work determine the perceived authenticity of their organizations' corporate social advocacy (CSA) initiatives on race. Organizational racial justice positively influenced employees' perceived value-driven motive for CSA as well as the authenticity of CSA. CSA authenticity, in turn, increased employees' supportive and organizational citizenship behaviors.

This study will provide organizational leaders and communication practitioners with practical guidelines on how to implement CSA initiatives on racial issues effectively and ethically to achieve moral legitimacy and support from internal members and improve organizational racial justice and employee relationship. Specifically, it suggests the importance of the consistency between organizations' work climate and CSA initiatives, which can be formed through strategic public relations and internal communication efforts.

**3. How Did U.S. Brands Respond to the Russian Invasion of Ukraine? The Role of Crisis Response Strategies in Agenda-Building Efforts**

*Ekaterina Romanova, University of Florida, Osama Albishri, King Addulazia University, Saudi Arabia; Phillip Arceneaux, Miami University of Ohio, & Spiro Kiouis, University of Florida*

Our study investigates the effectiveness of the crisis response strategies chosen by U.S. brands when responding to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Through a multi-stage content analysis, our study systematically categorizes crisis response strategies in brands' official statements, the nature of news coverage for each brand, and stakeholders' response.

By investigating brands' reputation through the SCCT and agenda-building theoretical frameworks, this study addresses the effectiveness of chosen strategies in a situation of a global military crisis. The results of our study can help better inform the decisions of public relations practitioners when addressing external crises.

4. **Bots As Agenda-Builders? The Influence of Inauthentic Coordinated Behavior in Ohio's 2022 Midterm Election**

*Phillip Arceneaux, Miami University of Ohio, Osama Albishri, King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia; Joshua Anderson, University of Texas, & Spiro Kiouis, University of Florida*

We use an agenda-building lens to explore the influence of inauthentic coordinated behavior, i.e., bots, in building the issue agenda across 17 races in Ohio's 2022 midterm election. A mixed-methods computer-assisted content analysis helps us to challenge the assumption of authenticity in political public relations in an era of disinformation.

This study looks to challenge the assumption of authenticity in both political public relations and agenda-building scholarship. This contributes to public relations by identifying and mapping the presence and influence of bots against organizational messaging. This serves to position public relations within the pressing discussion of disinformation and malign influence alongside other fields of study, including political communication, journalism, and advertising.

5. **Public Relations Professionals in Academic Publishing: How Public Relations Tactics are Employed to Keep the Shelves Filled and Reviews Written**

*Meta G. Carstarphen & Margarita H. Tapia, University of Oklahoma*

Academic books need PR. Two essential questions offer insight: (A) How do publicists responsible for marketing scholarly books assess the value of the book review in raising awareness about their titles? (B) What attributes of the book review contribute to how publicists assess its value? Data is from a survey.

The challenge to share news about recently published books may seem daunting but public relations professionals at these publishers are up for the task. Across the publishing industry, the responsibility for amplifying public exposure to the available volumes of books is closely aligned with various public relations functions and tactics. This study sails in largely uncharted research waters. No research was available on public relations professionals in academic publishing.

6. **From Black Lives Matter to Asian Lives Matter: Testing Situational Theory of Problem Solving and Problem Chain Recognition Effect**

*Myoung-Gi Chon, Auburn University*

Using situational theory of problem solving and model of problem recognition effect, this study investigates when and how people are motivated to participate in activism against anti-Asian hate crimes. Furthermore, this study tests how different racial groups perceive anti-Asian hate crimes and segment publics to predict active information behaviors.

The results of this study provide theoretical implications about STOPS by predicting activism and applying the PCR model to anti-Asian hate crimes. The findings suggest practical implications because the results show how situational motivation with the BLM

leads to interest in Asian racism and offer strategic insights about how to motivate people to participate in activism against anti-Asian hate crimes.

## **Session 14**

**9:45–10:45 a.m.**

**Arunima Krishna , Presiding**

**1. Let the Jury Decide: Arguing the Case Against Reputational Damage from a Crisis**

*Katie Delahaye Paine, Paine Publishing, LLC*

Recently high-profile defamation cases have captured the public’s attention. Reputational damage is at the heart of many cases, so PR researchers are being called as expert witnesses. This paper discusses the methods (successful or otherwise) that are being employed to assess the “cost” of a damaged reputation.

Testimony for and against the value of reputation and the cost of bad publicity on reputation that is being used in recent defamation cases can yield insights and case studies that are valuable to any organization facing a crisis or potential crisis.

**2. Name, Image, And Likeness: The Dilemma of Strengthening Your Value on Social Media as a College Athlete**

*Kelsey Darcy, Quinnipiac University*

The NCAA has allowed college athletes to make money off their Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) this was a fought battle for years, when it happened athletes thought they had the green light to make money, this isn’t entirely true. Research of interviews with many athletes shows why.

My research will have a great impact on the profession of athletes, team, professors, and school setting because it shows why and how the NCAA Name, Image, and Likeness is important and how to properly brand themselves as an athlete. Finding suggests that being an NCAA athlete on social media is a difficult, complex experience that people should be aware of to know how to help assist and to try and make the process easier.

**3. Measuring Perceived Authenticity in Corporate Social Advocacy**

*Ejae Lee, Indiana University*

***Fullintel Media Insights and Impact Award***

This study develops a measurement scale of perceived authenticity in corporate social advocacy. The study generated measurement items, assessed content validity, and specified the measurement model. Through pilot and main surveys for validity assessments, this study proposed a refined measurement scale of the concept. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

By measuring the different degrees of the four sub-constructs, it is possible to plan and implement what aspects of a CSA campaign more strategically an organization should focus on more. Here are several examples of what this might look like: which social issue or what material information is appropriate and adequate to increase authenticity perceptions from different audiences; how differently an organization approaches communication plans for various stakeholder groups—e.g., consumers, employees, shareholders, as well as media relations.

4. **Centering and De-Centering Diversity Initiatives: Accomplishments, Fatigue, and Barriers to DEIB In Academia and Professional Advertising and Public Relations Practice**

*Susan McFarlane-Alvarez, Michigan State University, & Mario V. Norman, Clayton State University*

This research examines two intersecting DEI trends. First, is the de-centering of DEI initiatives, from a single department or manager, to informing strategic operations across all areas of business. Second, is the issue of DEI fatigue, and the expression among both majority and minority groups of weariness toward diversity efforts.

This research investigates the implications of this transitional period for DEI, prospects for the success of initiatives and common perceptions among academic and corporate practitioners.

5. **How Gamification Impacts Employee Volunteering Participation in China**

*Yi-Ru Regina Chen, Hong Kong Baptist University, China*

Conducting an online experiment targeting 1,200 Chinese full-time employees, the study examines the role of gamification in triggering motivation-driven employee volunteering among Chinese employees using an integrative framework of self-determination theory, goal-setting theory, cognitive evaluation theory, and behavioral economics. The study expands the public relations literature in CSR.

The study will inform managerial decisions on CSR/employee volunteering gamification (e.g., if gamification should be adopted, to which employees, and for what purposes). It will also suggest the effective game-like design for gamified employee volunteering. Lastly, the small market size poses a challenge to the game industry in Hong Kong. The research results can inform a possible direction for the industry development by targeting use of games by the company/organization, in addition to the individual.

6. **Polarized Responses to Corporate Social Advocacy: Explicating the Role of Hope in Shaping Perceived Authenticity and Social Sharing**

*Juan Liu, Towson University, & Grace Wang, Bradley University*

***Boston University Award for the Top Paper about Public Relations  
and the Social and Emerging Media***

This study investigates how polarized corporate social advocacy responses interact with feelings of hope to affect perceived authenticity and social sharing. Results revealed that for participants who experienced high levels of hope, exposure to supporting (vs. boycotting) responses elicited greater perceived authenticity, which in turn enhanced intentions of social sharing.

When facing polarized responses, corporate public relations managers can promote CSA engagement on social media by delivering authentic commitment to advocated issues and designing CSA visual messages to provoke high intensity of positive emotions. This research advances the growing literature on CSA and has significant practical implications for public relations professionals who need to routinely measure, evaluate, and demonstrate the effectiveness of their advocacy campaigns and media relations strategies to executives within the C-suite and other important stakeholders.

## Session 15

11:00—Noon

Brian Smith, Presiding

1. **The State of Public Relations in Canada: A Bright Future from a Shady Past**

*Terrence (Terry) Flynn & Sabrina Lavi, McMaster University, Canada*

Public relations in Canada has experienced rapid changes over the last decade with the expansion of the practice, research-based graduate programs, industry accreditation programs. This research will provide a current and forward-looking baseline on the state of the practice in Canada from the perspective of Canadian CCOs.

Research on the state of the practice of public relations in Canada is best described as lacking. The intention of this research is to establish a benchmark on the current state of the practice and a forward-looking perspective based on conversations with 20 CCOs based in Canada. The results of this first phase will lead to broader survey of CCOs, heads of communications and lead communicators to understand a more general view of the future of the practice.

2. **Where Corporate Diplomacy and Advocacy Intersect: Analyzing Official Statements in Response to Russia's 2022 Invasion of Ukraine**

*Kelly Vibber & Alan Abitol, University of Dayton*

In response to Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, many companies issued official statements outlining how they will operate in Russia moving forward. This study focuses on the corporate responses to the invasion, specifically to examine their use of corporate diplomacy and corporate advocacy strategies in their official statements.

This research is among the first to examine how corporate diplomacy and advocacy intersect, as it examines company stances within a geopolitical context, specifically in response to an international war. Moreover, this research highlights the potential advocacy strategies companies may implement in such situations, as well as potential relationship maintenance strategies to use when changing the status of business operations in a host country.

3. **We Are All in This Together: Multinational Companies? Local CSR Initiatives Approach for Corporate Advocacy in Vietnam**

*Ba Anh Tu Truong, Louisiana State University, & Thuy Vu Tran, Kansas State University*

This paper aims to explore multinational companies (MNCs)'s CSR approach in emerging markets by examining CSR as a strategic method to enhance government advocacy. Content analysis is employed to investigate the CSR communication materials of six MNCs in Vietnam from 2018 to 2022, with a highlight on the COVID-19 period.

This study aims to fill this research gap and expects to provide practical implications for the CSR practices of multinational companies (MNCs) in the Vietnam market in particular and to further expand the understanding of emerging markets in general. CSR effort of MNCs in Vietnam during COVID-19 is specifically explored to see how the situation is leveraged to promote corporate advocacy.

4. **Health Influencers: How Expertise and Issue Fit Influence Credibility, Authenticity, Trust and Intended Behavior on Social Media**

*Nicolas Eng, Olivia Reed, Maranda Berndt, Jin Chen, Triwik Kurniasari, & Denise Bortree, Pennsylvania State University*

As health organizations develop influencer marketing campaigns, they engage a variety of influencers, including credentialed medical professionals, patients with chronic health issues, influencers who speak on one health issue, and influencers who speak on many issues. How these different types of influencers motivate audiences is the focus of this study.

Health organizations can use the results of this study to help predict the outcomes of health influencer campaigns based on the expertise and issue fit of influencers. The study offers insights about the effect of health influencers who are medical professionals vs. those with “lived experience” with a chronic medical condition. It also explores whether an influencer’s social media focus on general health topics vs. the specific issue affects the way the audiences perceive and act on messages.

5. **Advancing Relationship Management Theory: Examining the Relational Public Relations Goals of Government Organizations**

*Jordan Morehouse, Clemson University, & Chuqing Dong, Michigan State University*

Relationship management scholarship predominantly focuses on organization-public relationships to such a degree that other essential relationships are overlooked and omitted (Heath, 2013). Through 32 semi-structured interviews with county government communicators, this study develops a multi-public relationship management framework applicable to government public relations.

This study provides practical guidance for government communication practitioners regarding cultivating and managing multiple relationships with diverse publics, often with competing needs and interests, and with little support or training for the communicators themselves. This study also makes several contributions to relationship management theory and research on government public relations, including the identification and value of various relationships within the government context, as well as the contextual complexities present within government-public relationship management.

**LUNCH BREAK Noon to 1:30 p.m.**

**Session 16**

**1:30—2:30 p.m.**

**Zongchao Cathy Li, Presiding**

1. **What Should CSR in the AI Industry Look Like?—A Current Assessment and a Framework for the Future**

*Heeso Jang, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

This study seeks to (a) evaluate the current state of the AI industry’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and use this evaluation to (b) provide a theory of AI corporate responsibility. To do so, this study applies Nneka Logan (2021)’s theory of corporate

responsibility to race (CRR) as its theoretical framework.

This study presents a snapshot of how AI companies are currently navigating the criticisms they are receiving regarding AI harms and biases from the perspective of PR and, especially, CSR. By doing so, this study provides implications and directions for the future of CSR in the AI industry. Theoretically, this study situates AI ethics in the PR literature and demonstrates how PR and CSR can guide the AI industry toward a more ethical and responsible future.

**2. The Impact of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) on Employee Engagement Mediated by Internal CSR and Moderated by Collegiality and Compensation**

*Haoyu Liu, University of Miami*

The purpose of this study is to examine how perceived organizational support (POS) impacts employee engagement. More specifically, it investigates how the working environment and organizational support in different departments affect employee engagement through the mediation effect of career development and job-demand-support and the moderation effect of collegiality and compensation. The data for an employee survey among 942 employees in Arizona will be analyzed using multiple linear regression.

The study suggests how organizations can promote employee engagement by raising POS through internal CSR and boosting the positive impact through better working conditions and remuneration. The classic ideas of POS and internal CSR serve as the foundation for this research's ongoing exploration of new and in-depth aspects that influence employee engagement. Additionally, this study analyzes current workplace problems and offers managers alternatives. Research suggests the relationship between CSR and corporate image; however, few scholars have examined the impact of the type of CSR messages on corporate image. This research examines how internal and external CSR influence consumers' perceptions of corporate image in a cross-cultural context, which adds to the body of literature. The practical implications of this study provide potential insights to public relations practitioners who want to utilize CSR strategies to advance corporate image in cross-cultural business as well as increase the overall understanding of CSR practices amongst two dominant cultural orientations of the world. Furthermore, this study and its findings can inspire and inform global companies to develop cultural-specific messages of CSR to enhance their corporate image in international markets.

**3. Keeping Employees During the Great Resignation: The Impact of Leadership Communication on Newcomer Adjustment, Well-Being, and Employee-Organization Relationships**

*Cen April Yue, University of Connecticut, Sifan Xu, University of Tennessee, Weiting Tao, University of Miami, & Lei Vincent Huan, Hong Kong Baptist University, China*

Integrating theories from relationship management, organizational socialization, and leadership communication, the current study examines how an essential component of internal communication—leaders' use of motivating language—can facilitate newcomers' socialization, strengthen their relationship with the organization, and promote psychological well-being over time. We adopted a two-wave longitudinal

survey design.

This study has important implications for organizational leaders and internal communication professionals. This study suggests that communication with newcomers, especially during the early stage of socialization, should focus on giving clear task-related instructions and providing helpful advice on how to improve their work. Moreover, public relations practitioners should invest in increasing newcomers' knowledge of their organizations, such as history, goals and objectives, politics, and culture, as a way to foster quality relationships between newcomers and their organizations.

4. **Applying Relationship-Oriented Public Relations in Tourism: Exploring the Case of Strategic Public Relations in Community-Based Tourism**

*Loarre Andreu Perez, Inha University, South Korea, & Suhhee Choi, Kyunghee University, South Korea*

This paper expands the horizons of public relations theory by applying it to tourism, more concretely to community-based tourism (CBT). The strategic action-oriented public relations model is applied to CBT to analyze stakeholders, their decision-making and impact on issues related to the tourism initiative

The present research applied a public relations theoretical model in the context of tourism, more concretely in community-based tourism. This type of initiatives are common in agricultural communities, rural spaces and small cities. The application of the model gives real solutions to real problems, and help better understanding the complex publics of community-based tourism.

5. **Identifying and Prioritizing Stakeholders for Public Relations**

*Marianne Eisenmann, PR/Communications Professional (retired), & John Gilfeather, John Gilfeather & Associates*

Stakeholder management is fundamental to the practice of public relations. This paper builds on the seminal 2006 paper by Professor Brad Rawlins, Prioritizing Stakeholders for Public Relations. It provides practitioners' perspectives on defining stakeholders in corporate and non-profit settings, in addition to applying the prioritization models presented in Professor Rawlins' paper.

Key to the success of implementing strategic public relations is the practitioners' ability to accurately identify the stakeholders with whom they need to build relationships and prioritize them based on values and expectations. Experts have proposed a number of theoretical approaches to this task. This research aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice, through a sequential and comprehensive examination of the prioritization strategies, revealing how to both identify and map stakeholders in a practical setting.

6. **Sometimes You Need a RAT: An Arena Perspective on Corporate Social Advocacy and Polarization**

*Finn Frandsen, Winni Johansen, Aarhus University, Denmark; Sherry Holladay, Independent Researcher, & W. Timothy Coombs, Centre for Crisis and Risk Communication*

Practitioner and academic agree on the increasing need for corporations to utilize corporate social advocacy while societies are experiencing increased polarization about

sociopolitical issues. Polarization makes CSA decisions more complicated by intensifying conflict. We use the Rhetorical Arena Theory (RAT) to guide the use of CSR in a polarized environment.

Navigating polarizing socio-political issues is a growing concern in the practice along with increased pressure to engage in corporate social advocacy. Polarization makes CSA decisions more complicated by intensifying conflict. We use the Rhetorical Arena Theory (RAT) to guide the use of CSR in a polarized environment. We note building tolerance should be a part of CSA as it counters polarization. Values promotion is offered one option for promoting tolerance and lessening polarization.

## **Session 17**

**2:45—3:45 p.m.**

**Don W. Stacks, Presiding**

### **1. Breaking The News of a Data Breach: Content Analysis of Public Relations Strategies Among Companies Dealing with Hacks, Leaks, and Data Theft**

*Jessica Shaw, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill*

The number and frequency of online data breaches are increasing in recent years. This study explores companies' efforts to communicate news of leaks, hacks, and data theft through their press releases. Using the situational crisis communication theory, a content analysis of 64 press releases examines the companies' framing and response strategies.

Following a T-Mobile data breach in August 2021, personal information belonging to more than 76 million people were stolen and sold on the dark web (Musil & Brown, 2021). Online data breaches have become a recurrent issues, increasing in both numbers and frequency (Roumani, 2022). Not only do data breaches impose heavy monetary costs on companies and consumers (Arghire, 2020), these types of cybersecurity issues also pose a serious reputational threat (Wang & Park, 2017). The length of time between the breach and consumer notification is critical in protecting consumer confidentiality, integrity, and data (Peters, 2014). Journalists are not always capable of covering all aspects of this topic; therefore, they depend on public relation practitioners to serve as important news sources (Davis, 2000; McCombs, 2003). Companies play a key role in improving the information flow, as well as providing their customers with necessary knowledge this particular type of crisis. In communicating a data breach, press releases often serve critical tool for both journalists and PR practitioners.

### **2. A Second Look at Public Relations Licensing: Privileged Communication as an Incentive**

*Tyler Page, University of Connecticut, Luke Capizzo, University of Missouri, & Tim Penning, Grand Valley State University*

#### ***Best Paper on 2023 IPRRC Theme***

Using an analogy with psychotherapy, we argue that licensing of public relations can comply with the First Amendment by providing incentives to licensees, as opposed to

restricting the practice of the unlicensed. We review several potential incentives, including a detailed analysis of a proposed right to privileged communication.

This research proposes a mechanism for licensing public relations practitioners. Licensed practitioners could be given incentives similar to those granted to other professions that work through communication. Licensing would benefit public relations by establishing the practice as a full profession. Several benefits would follow from this change, including the ability to truly enforce codes of conduct and providing professional associations with more tools to combat unethical practitioners and purveyors of mis- and disinformation.

**3. Mitigating Organizational Conspiracy Beliefs Through Strategic Internal Communication and Employee-Organization Relationships (EOR) in the Workplace**

*Young Kim, Marquette University, & Hyunji (Dana) Lim, Alma University*

Using a national survey (N = 810) among full-time employees in the United States, this study provides meaningful insight into how internal communication managers can prevent negative employee outcomes that are closely associated with organizational conspiracy theories in the workplace by practicing strategic internal communication and developing high-quality of EOR.

This study provides implications on how an effective internal communication system—based on openness, listening, and relationship cultivation—should be practiced in order to monitor and attenuate organizational conspiracy beliefs among employees that undermine the organizational effectiveness. The findings demonstrate that the high-quality of employee-organization relationships based on two-way symmetrical communication with employees are likely to reduce the potential for possible conspiracy theories and, in turn, for turnover intentions in the workplace.

**4. Resilience of Female Employees Against Gender Mistreatment: Leadership, Relationship Quality, and Communicative Behaviors**

*Enzhu Dong, Yeunjae Lee, & Queenie Jo-Yun Li, University of Miami*

***Plank Center Award for Leadership in Public Relations***

This study examines how inclusive leadership communication cultivates female employees' affective well-being who have experienced workplace gender discrimination. The results showed that inclusive leadership increases employee-organization relationship quality and encourages female employees to actively communicate about gender issues at work with their supervisor, which in turn, improve affective well-being.

This study bridges inclusive leadership to female employees' affective well-being to examine potential employees' coping strategies to deal with workplace unfair treatment. By considering the mediating effects of employee-organization relationship and active communication behaviors, this study will contribute to an increasing body of knowledge on the role of internal communication on employees' well-being and resilience. It will also explicitly provide insights into resolving diversity/equality/inclusion (DEI) issues in public relations setting.

- 5. The Role of Employees' Workplace Communication Networks on Employee Engagement: Exploring from Egocentric Network and Social Capital Approach**  
*Katie (Haejung) Kim, Yan Qu, & Adam Saffer, University of Minnesota, Twin-Cities*

***University of Georgia Advertising & Public Relations Top Paper Award  
for Public Relations Theory and Practice***

A survey of 400 full-time employees was conducted to examine the role of employees' workplace communication networks in affecting employee voice behavior and engagement. Employees' information-sharing network characteristics –size, strength, diversity, and friendship– are positively related to voice behavior, further promoting employee engagement. Implications for theory and practice are discussed.

By demonstrating the benefits of employees' workplace social networks on employee voice and engagement, our findings show that organizational leaders and corporate communications professionals can go beyond formal internal communication practices to encourage employees to share and learn valuable organizational issues and information through large and diverse informal communications networks with their coworkers.

- 6. Publics' Involvement, Amount of Available Official Information, and the Situational Theory of Publics: Analyzing the Spread of Misinformation and Fake News About COVID-19**

*JenHee Han, University of Dayton*

The study uses the involvement, information, and situational theory of publics to examine the spread of misinformation/ fake news about COVID-19. The spreads in Korea and in the US were analyzed using time series analysis. The results suggest the spread can be minimized with timely responses and adequate information.

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## **Session 18**

**4:00–5:00**

**Sean Williams, Presiding**

- 1. Examining Employees' Communicative Actions Around "Quiet Quitting": Testing Burnout, Mindfulness, and Employee Engagement in the Integrated Framework of STOPS And COR**

*Pratiti Diddi, George Mason University, & Sushma Kumble, Towson University*

The survey study uses integrated framework of Situation Theory of Problem Solving (STOPS) and Conservation of Resources (COR) to investigate how and why employees are situationally motivated to engage in communication behaviors around issue of 'Quiet quitting', an employment trend where employees clock in to do bare minimum at work.

The current study provides significant practical implications for organizational leaders and practitioners of communication and public relations. Understanding how ‘burnout’ and ‘mindfulness’ play a role in situationally motivating the employees to take communicative actions gives insights on how to improve employee engagement at workplace, helping them maintain work-life balance while doing so.

2. **Cultivating Employees’ Megaphoning Behaviors: Highlighting Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Authenticity**

*Enzhu Dong & Dongqing Xu, University of Miami*

This study aims to examine how CSR with economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary responsibilities impacts employees’ megaphoning behaviors through the mediation effect of perceived corporate authenticity. The conceptual model was tested through an online survey among 507 full-time employees working in various industries in the U.S.

This study bridges CSR to employees’ megaphoning behaviors (i.e., positive and negative megaphoning) to examine how corporations take responsibility in the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary dimensions to affect individual communicative behaviors. By considering the mediating effect of perceived corporate authenticity, this study will contribute to the discipline of public relations through investigating how an authentic corporate image would be established by CSR and its role in impacting employees’ megaphoning behaviors.

3. **“There Is Hope and There Is Help”: Reclaiming Family Narratives of Opioid Misuse to Improve Audience Communication**

*Cheryl Ann Lambert, Kent State University, & Kody Elsayed, New York University*

More than two million Americans live with addiction to opioids, yet little is known about messages for affected family members. In-depth interviews with health communication specialists and family members of opioid misusers revealed five thematic approaches to construct meaningful messages for family members of opioid misusers.

Messages about opioid misuse must be tailored to select publics that are often facing isolation and stigma. Narrative techniques can help public relations professionals create meaningful, effective messages. The profession could better communicate to vulnerable, marginalized populations.

4. **Corporate Social Responsibility, Advocacy and Impact: A Multiple Case Analysis**

*Kenneth D. Plowman & Robert Walz, Brigham Young University*

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate social advocacy (CSA), and corporate social impact (CSI) were the focus of this multiple case study of four organizations. This multiple case study also addressed how these organization assist the Utah Hazara Association, an association of recent Afghani refugees.

Social impact in corporate social responsibility terms is beyond the measurable outcomes of typical public relations objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. Social impact is the effect on broader society of those outcomes, This study examined how several organizations are accomplishing both CSR/CSA outcomes and impacts.

5. **CSR, ESG, Or Environmental Justice? Public Relations? Professional Responsibilities and Evolving Expectations For Stewardship And Citizenship**

*Luke Capizzo & Monique Luisi, University of Missouri*

This research analyzes the definitions and the explicit and implicit relationships among Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and environmental justice. We explore their roles in public relations theory and practice. Furthermore, we suggest a path for articulating justice and equity more explicitly for the profession.

ESG is a rapidly growing term in use by PR professionals, yet there is still definitional murkiness around the distinctions between ESG and CSR, as well as how this new term relates to PR ethics and responsibilities. Practitioners would benefit from clearer definitions and more robust ethical guidance in order to best counsel organizations, particularly around environmental and sustainability issues. Additionally, environmental justice may be a helpful lens to focus on the human and ecological outcomes of organizational actions.

6. **How Hispanic and Latino Young Adults Respond to COVID-19 Crisis Information on Social Media: Opportunities of Overcoming Digital Inequality Threat to Public Health**

*Karen Robayo-Sanchez, Yan Jin, University of Georgia, & Vivian Medina-Messner, Virginia Commonwealth University*

Our research seeks to provide current knowledge on media usage by Hispanic and Latino young adults in a health crisis. We will perform a survey to identify the sources and means used by this population during COVID-19 to seek, vet, and share information in a social media-mediated health crisis.

This study will be among the first pursuing to identify the sources and media used by Hispanic and Latino young adults during the COVID-19 pandemic to seek, vet, and share information in a social media-mediated health crisis. Our findings will contribute to future research essential to advancing health public relations theory and practice by addressing the digital inequality and health information disparity challenges confronting racial and ethnic minority groups in times of public health.

**5:30–6:30 p.m.**

**AWARDS CEREMONY**

**Don W. Stacks, Sean Williams, and Board of Directors, Presiding**

***Arthur W. Page Center Benchmarking Award*** (\$1,000)

A Matter of Trust: Understanding the Impact of Trust-Driving Attributes in Three Major American Companies in Media and Public Perceptions

*Angela Dwyer, Fullintel, & Tyler Page, University of Connecticut*

***Baylor University Department of Journalism, Public Relations & New Media Top Ethics Award*** (\$1,000)

“I Check My Ego at the Door”: Exploring Ethical Listening Among Public Relations Professionals

*Katie Place, Quinnipiac University*

**Best Paper on 2023 IPRRC Theme (\$1,000)**

A Second Look at Public Relations Licensing: Privileged Communication as an Incentive  
*Tyler Page, University of Connecticut, Luke Capizzo, University of Missouri, & Tim Penning, Grand Valley State University*

**Boston University Award for the Top Paper about Public Relations and the Social and Emerging Media (\$1,500)**

Polarized Responses to Corporate Social Advocacy: Explicating the Roles of Hope and Perceived Authenticity in Shaping Online Engagement, Word of Mouth, and Purchasing Intention

*Juan Liu, Towson University, & Grace Wang, Bradley University*

**Fullintel Media Insights and Impact Award (\$1,000)**

Measuring Perceived Authenticity in Corporate Social Advocacy  
*Ejae Lee, Indiana University*

**Koichi Yamamura International Strategic Communication Award (\$1,000)**

Quality of Communication Consulting: Demystifying the Concept and Current Practices Based on an International Study of Strategic Communication Practices

*Daniel Ziegele, Sabrina Doberts, Ansgar Zerfass, University of Leipzig, Germany; & Dejan Vercic, University of Ljubljana*

**Peter Debreceny Corporate Communication Award (\$500)**

Value-Driven Relationship Management: Exploring the Contingent Organization-Public Relationships (COPR) During a Paracrisis Duo

*Feifei Chen, College of Charleston, & Yang Cheng, North Carolina State University*

**Plank Center award for Leadership in Public Relations (\$1,000)**

Resilience of Female Employees Against Gender Mistreatment: Leadership, Relationship Quality, and Communicative Behaviors

*Enzhu Dong, Yeunjae Lee, & Queenie Jo-Yun Li, University of Miami*

**University of Georgia Advertising & Public Relations Top Paper award for Public Relations Theory and Practice (\$1,000)**

The Role of Employees' Workplace Communication Networks on Employee Engagement: Exploring from Egocentric Network and Social Capital Approach

*Katie (Haejung) Kim, Yan Qu, & Adam Saffer, University of Minnesota, Twin-Cities*

**University of Miami School of Communication Top Student Paper Award (\$1,000)**

Long-Term Effects of Cancel Culture on Brand Perception: An Analysis of Gen Z Perceptions of Brands and Controversial Advertisements

*Amanda Withrow & Amanda Coleman, University of Oklahoma*

**CLOSING SESSION 6:00 p.m. or immediately after Awards Ceremony**

**ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 2024**

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