PRODUCTIVE TRANSDISCIPLINARY INTERSECTIONS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT: transferring theoretical models to practical applications in society

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Abstract

The purpose of this work is to offer a critical and realistic transdisciplinary perspective of PR intervention in complex problems which have perverse effects in society. These *wicked problems* affect all components of the socio-economic system and therefore, public and private organizations, their stakeholders, and citizens in general.

Based on literature review and an analysis of the controversy between "rethorics to solve wicked problems" and "realistic management of wicked problems", we present a set of real experiences addressed from humble intelligence in PR. In these experiences, the main role of PR starts from fostering knowledge and ignorance dialogue, and has enabled participation of involved actors, including, in some cases, university students of the PR subject in the degree of Advertising and PR.

Taking as a reference on one hand the critical theory that considered social pathologies (Freud), social learning and the improvement of the human response (Weber) and capitalism as trigger of social pathologies (Marx), and on the other hand, Bordieux' thinking, which suggests the need to be critical and go beyond *habitus*, the critical theory of PR may reflect upon possible pathologies in PR, causes and consequences, and means to responsible and educational intervention.

We analyze 8 cases related with ecologic intelligence, sustainable development, social innovation in conflictive areas, relational government and feminist public policies, citizen participation and technological gap reduction, technological surveillance and university-company relational innovation, dialogue and life quality among vulnerable communities, and PR and computational linguistics, while we show the productive role of the PR discipline in relation with other areas of knowledge.

From Competences to Capabilities: the concepts and the practice.

Mini Panel consisting of Professor Anne Gregory, Dr Johanna Fawkes, University of Huddersfield and Professor Elena Gutierrez-Garcia, University of Navarre

There will be three speakers in the Panel, dividing up the three sections of the Abstract below. We request a speaking period of 40 mins with time for questions afterwards. We are happy to share the platform with any others who are speaking on the topic of competency/capability.

ABSTRACT

From Competences to Capabilities: the concepts and the practice.

Concepts of competence, competency and capability are used throughout management literature. Some of this thinking has permeated public relations scholarship and numerous attempts have been made to suggest or build competency/capability frameworks (Gregory, 2008, Tench & Moreno, 2015; Global Alliance, 2016, Fawkes et al, 2017,). However, the majority of these frameworks are both normative, that is, about what practitioners *ought* to be able to do, and based on notions of *hierarchy,* usually attempting to define the practice at three levels, entry, mid and senior.

This mini panel firstly explores the uses of these current terms, but more interestingly, introduces literature from wider fields, such as professional development and human development, which also explores competency and capability frameworks. A discrete and powerful body of theory has emerged from human development policy and impacted on educational and professional theory and practice, among other fields, though not, as yet, in public relations scholarship. The Capability Approach emerges from the human development work of Nobel prize-winning economist Amartya Sen, together with insights from philosopher Martha Nussbaum. This starts from the point of human flourishing and well-being, challenging the notion that human endeavor at work should be calculated

largely through return on investment measures and cost/benefit analyses when crafting and evaluating human development policy.

Secondly, the panel will introduce the research that has underpinned work funded and led by the University of Huddersfield, who with nine global academic partners, [1] in six continents have undertaken a two-year research project in support of the Global Alliance's aim to create a Global *Capability* Framework for public relations and communication management. The brief was to build a framework that would:

- Offer practical value to Global Alliance (GA) affiliated professional bodies and their members, world-wide;

- Reflect cultural and regional variations in public relations as a global profession;

- Be forward looking in its approach.

The focus of this part of the panel will be on the design and implementation of the research, which sought to keep faith with the principles of Sen and Nussbaum to produce a Global Capability Framework that had at its centre concepts of self, professionalism and regional agency. The panel will show the resultant Global Capability Framework and how the software that underpins it assists with the concepts of agency and well -being.

Third, the Panel will examine the reception to the capability approach in Spain and the UK and draw out country contrasts and similarities with the Global Framework.

For example in Spain both academic and professional communities saw the capability approach as an opportunity for continuing to develop a distinct conceptual framework appropriate to the country. The Spanish profession is a young and evolving practice, but still without a clear conceptual and practical delineation. The current situation is explained by historical and specific regional distinctions and the traditional absence of specialised higher education programmes which has had consequences on current practitioners' capacities. In addition, the lack of programmes on communication management in the Business Schools explains why executives do not have a shared comprehension of what communication is and can contribute. Both academics and practitioners agreed that a Global Capability Framework, externally endorsed, would help the profession in its daily battle for public

recognition. The nine capabilities listed in Spain reveal a reflective approach; what the profession stands for in organisations and in Society. A key feature is that practitioners see themselves as *curators* who support their organisations with their various relations in society. The Panel will reveal and discuss the nine Spanish Capabilities.

In the UK, the results were not significantly dissimilar in that there is still an on-going battle for legitimacy both organizationally and in society, but the profession is more mature in the UK and traction has been gained at senior levels. There have also been academic programmes in the UK for almost 30 years and many of them are based in Business Schools. However, in slight contrast to the Spanish situation, the orientation of the capabilities by practitioners in particular is more towards support for the corporate organisation meeting its objectives and less about the societal role and responsibility of public relations. Testing of the 11 elements of the UK capability framework with organisations revealed a hunger to move away from lists and hierarchies of competencies towards a more flexible approach that recognized the needs of particular geographies and organisations. The 11 capabilities specific to the UK will be revealed and discussed.

The Panel will conclude with some observations about the overall approach and recommendations for the future.

Note
1. The partners institutions in the project were:
University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, UK; Lund University, Sweden; Singapore Management University, Singapore; University of Pretoria, South Africa; University of Navarre, Spain; University of Oklahoma, USA; Mount Saint Vincent University & McMaster University, Canada; RMIT University & University of Curtin, Australia; Universidad Abierta Interamericana, Argentina.

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Where is your Company Placed in the Polis of Social Media? A proposal of a Dialogic Conceptual Tool

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ABSTRACT

As Internet and social media make two-way communication possible, dialogue has become an area of increasing importance to Public Relations (PR) in recent years. From an inter-disciplinary thinking of PR (L'Etang, 2007), Kent & Taylor (2002) considers that dialogue can be used as a framework to understand and study communication through Internet and social media. The origins of the application of dialogue as a framework for studying communication relationships are found in Ancient Greece, in the Socratic Dialogues of Plato (Kent, Taylor, & Mcallister-Spooner, 2008).

Based on dialogical Kent & Taylor's (1998) theoretical framework to create dialogic relationships with public through the Internet, a new dialogic conceptual tool has been created in this research. The tool consists of a questionnaire which analyzes 61 variables and 39 sub-variables on three dimensions: Presence, Content and Interactivity.

In connection with this questionnaire, a five-point scale that classifies companies in terms of their use of social media has been created. The scale is called *Poliscale* and is inspired by Greek culture. In this typology, and depending on the result obtained in the questionnaire, organizations are placed in the Necropolis, the Thermal Baths, the Tavern, the Bibliotheca/Library or the Agora (from "very low" to "very high" level of dialogic communication).

The questionnaire and the scale were applied to a sample of the content published by Ibex 35 and Fortune 500 companies on blogs, Facebook and Twitter in September 2014, February

2015 and February 2016. A total of 2,243 tweets, 8,340 Facebook posts and 177 blog posts were analyzed. Both the questionnaire and the scale might help standardize the qualitative evaluation of how organizations are using social media from a PR perspective.

Inter-method triangulation was applied to carry out this research: virtual ethnography, non-participant observation and critical discourse analysis (CDA).

Key Words: social media, dialogic communication, public relations

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"It's respectable now": The parallels between the histories of pole dancing and public relations

Billings, S. and Bridgen, E. (2018)

> *Respectability is one of the most ubiquitous signifiers of class. It informs how we speak, who we speak to, how we classify others, what we study and how we know who we are (or are not). Respectability is usually the concern of those who are seen not to have it." (Skeggs, 1997:1)*

Public relations is "an industry striving towards greater respectability" (PR Week, 2014). While public relations has many histories, the one favoured by Western textbooks tells of an occupation with a history mired by dubious propagandists which subsequently recreated itself as a "respectable" "profession."

Despite industry attempts to present it as a strategic management function, public relations is still associated with, and uses, propaganda techniques.   While writers such as Moloney (2006) and L'Etang (2006, 2008) see this contradiction as part of the chaotic whole of public relations, industry institutions (such as the Chartered Institute of Public Relations) seek to distance themselves from propaganda techniques.

This distancing from the past can also be seen in the seemingly unrelated world of pole dancing where pole dancing's tensions between past and present provides parallels with, and lessons for, the public relations industry.

Pole dancing may have its roots in Indian sport of mallakhamb but many know it as a form of dancing which has developed largely within strip clubs and practiced by women working in, and associated with, the sex industry. Thus, the history of pole dancing is associated with a group of women who face occupational stigma and are not seen as "respectable".

However, practitioners of modern pole dancing (often restyled as 'pole fitness') have attempted to reinvent the activity and separate it from its past with classes held in corporate gyms which focus on achievement and fun (Griffiths, 2015). This embodiment of respectability is evident in the sport's efforts to be seen as an Olympic sport, and the commodification of success in terms of accreditation of teachers and the offer of attainment

awards to students. Those taking part in pole dancing as a fitness activity seek to distance themselves from the 'stripper' past and frame pole dancing not just as a respectable pursuit but discuss it in terms of women's empowerment and it's here that we can refer to Finlayson's (2003) work on modernity, where modernisation marginalises those who cannot keep pace.

The 'modernisation' of pole dancing has caused a tension between past and present which has led to sex workers clearly articulating claims that to distance modern pole dancing from its roots seeks to undermine and devalue the women who created the sport. This provides a powerful parallel with the history of public relations where the past has been sanitised and discredited by marginalising those who were originally at the forefront of development and thus denying those on the edges a voice.

This is a fascinating debate and one which raises some extremely pertinent questions about how we value (and devalue) certain occupations and how in pursuit of modernisation of any industry we speak for, and thus devalue, the views of our founding fathers - or mothers.

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Diversity initiatives - what happens next?: Telling stories about life after the Taylor Bennett Foundation training and mentoring scheme

Bridgen, Elizabeth

Introduction

While the number of public relations practitioners who believe that diversity within the occupation of public relations makes the practice more effective, the industry remains white and middle class (Chartered Institute of Public Relations, 2017). The arguments for diversity in public relations are many, with 59% of CIPR (Chartered Institute of Public Relations) members believing that diverse teams created better campaigns (CIPR, 2017) due to an appreciation of a wider set of audiences, the input of fresh ideas and perspectives and the creation of trust with varied and 'new' stakeholders (CIPR, 2015)

However, this practice view can be contrasted with a more radical standpoint which sees the promotion of diversity not as a moral or ethical act but a commodifiable one where practitioners from, for instance, BAME backgrounds are seen to be more useful in specific circumstances, rather than in general as they "can be called on as required by external circumstances (for example, to embody diversity in a particular campaign, or to offer knowledge of a particular audience), but whiteness takes precedence elsewhere." (Edwards, 2015:98).

However, Edwards also observes that the fact that BAME practitioners have voluntarily joined the occupation of public relations means that they cannot be understood as "victims of occupational dogma" (2015:99) and it is these practitioners on which this paper focusses.

Through a series of in-depth interviews with seven graduates of the Taylor Bennett Foundation training and mentoring scheme, which aims to help BAME graduate succeed in public relations, this paper explores the individual life stories of six graduates of the UK-based pro-diversity initiative. In doing so it aims to assess the impact of such programmes on the lives of practitioners.

The Taylor Bennett Foundation aims to encourage black, Asian and ethnic minority graduates to pursue a career in communications and seeks to address the need for greater diversity in the public relations industry. Since its foundation in 2008 has trained 170 graduates, 83% of whom have gone on to work in the PR and communications industry (Taylor Bennett Foundation, 2017).

Focussing on race as a particular aspect of diversity, this paper explores the impact of the work of the Taylor Bennett Foundation. Moving away from empirical data, this paper examines the rich lived experience of public relations practitioners from BAME backgrounds who have benefited from this initiative.

The study is carried out via seven in-depth interviews with graduates of the Taylor Bennett Foundation training scheme to discover their experiences of working in public relations and how they see their position in the industry. It also examines their views of race, diversity initiatives, and everyday life to understand how their experiences compare (or tally) with both professional and academic views and whether these employees are giving the industry a fresh perspective and connection with 'new' audiences or whether these new public relations practitioners are simply accepting and working within industry ideologies .

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PR on air

Carolina Carbone

Since 2014, the students of Public and Institutional Relations of Universidad de Belgrano have produced and conducted a micro radio program that is broadcasted on FM Radio Universidad de Belgrano 90.9 and on the Internet at www.radioub.com.ar

The Espacio Joven de Relaciones Públicas programme began as a career project within Public and Institutional Relations in order to help students achieve some of the skills that a good professional is expected to have. The aim of this project is to enable the future professional to speak fluently in public, to learn how to use a microphone, to lose the fear of speaking in public or in front of an audience and to be able to generate strong relationships for the programme. Among other things, they have to research potential interviewees, generate contacts and create questions to be asked at the program. Besides following up and managing the interview, the students have to invite them to the studio or interview them at their workplaces or at a professional meeting.

During the third year of the career, the students are taught theoretical content at the Audiovisual Media course. Whereas on the following year, they learn how to manage the radio programme independently at the Audiovisual Production course (fourth year, first semester).

Thanks to this radio program our students have won two awards for youth radio programs: the Golden Lighthouse Award in 2016 and the Goldfish Award in 2017. This year they have been nominated for another award.

Tags: Classroom Strategies, Youth, Public Relations, Radio broadcasting

Efficiency doesn't translate: cultural influences on healthcare communication

Margaret Brunton, Catherine Cook

Sustaining public healthcare systems is a "wicked problem" fraught with managerialist demands for efficiency – but as this study reports, prioritising productivity can come at the cost of communication effectiveness, especially in a system where significant numbers of internationally qualified nurses (IQNs) work alongside local staff. This New Zealand-based research comprised a 2-phase multi-method study, carried out between 2014-2017, to investigate intercultural influences on workplace communication, perceptions and practices of registered nurses involved in diverse healthcare teams. The findings pose challenges not only for nurses themselves but also, and especially, for those who manage healthcare practitioners.

The healthcare context is the quintessential setting for PR considered as relationship management (Ledingham and Bruning, 2003). The NZ health sector relies upon the highest percentage of IQNs in the OECD, but in this study, fewer than half of registered nurses reported that their manager encouraged them to learn about cultural diversity, while IQNs consistently reported feeling they had to work harder for acceptance. However, the study also discovered that if managers made only relatively small changes, their initiatives would benefit from many nurses' willingness to engage with change and participate in initiatives to help foster collaborative working environments. Such findings are more than merely academic: in culturally diverse healthcare environments, patient safety is being is being compromised by miscommunication. Encouraging mutual understanding becomes a high-stakes priority that should trump efficiency metrics alone.

It's not (just) about robots: PR and Artificial Intelligence

Christopher Galloway

When one hears about Machine Learning a.k.a Artificial Intelligence (AI), it is often robotics that come to mind: "intelligent" machines that can now do everything from surgery to welding to some domestic tasks. But while (arguably) public relations practitioners are unlikely to be replaced by robots any time soon (or ever) AI developments deserve PR's consideration.

This is because AI integration with mobile devices in particular is being used for basic decision support functions which may, as the technology is enhanced, limit public relations' ability to fulfil its mission of exerting influence on behalf of clients and employers. But AI's implications for PR practice are not all that warrant assessment. Media of all types are using AI-based technologies for everything from storytelling to subscriber analysis, as are some other stakeholder organisations. These technologies include Augmented Reality (AR), Mixed Reality (MR) and Virtual Reality (VR).

While it will probably take several years for them to reach full potential, and research suggests that their development will parallel continued use of older approaches, public relations practitioners should consider what the changes might mean for their practice. For example, campaign planning might well need reconceptualising as AI enables the creation of experiences that are not only immersive but also influential because they engage more of the audience's attentional resources.

This paper suggests some aspects of AI, both present and likely future, that could be productive for reflexive practitioners wanting to identify possible new paths for their profession. It does so not to propose that PR people necessarily become expert technologists but rather, to advocate that practitioners develop a sufficient understanding of AI and related technologies to be able to offer informed, workable advice to clients.

Globalising challenges: Theories in historiography, in PR, and in PR history

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As befits its focus on the past, history as a discipline, not only has a long record of interdisciplinarity but has a long record of reflecting on its disciplinary interaction through historiography (the study of the writing of history). Over the last three decades, historiography has been further augmented with fast-growing bodies of work. Notable development include ways to move beyond perspectives centred on nation states to make space to enter into more expansive theorising of events, movements, and trends across the planet and between politically and geographically different parts of the planet. This paper will argue that both PR and PR history have much to learn from general history and historiography in terms of approaches, methods, and theories. In making the argument, we will look at a diverse range of texts from the latter two areas to illustrate the evolution of their thinking on globalisation, with specific emphasis on transferrable methods and theories relevant to PR and to PR history. It will also focus on helping the field to catch three major posts (postcolonialism, postmodernism, and poststructuralism) that have been found to intersect productively with a wide range of diverse disciplines. In making these comparisons, and in taking care to acknowledge the massive asymmetry of resources between the fields, we attempt to construct as well as deconstruct. Or, in other words, the paper seeks to provide a response to Thomas Carlyle's (1836/2008) rhetorical question, "Only a torch for burning, no hammer for building?" (p. 147) by the provision of a set of tools with the potential to positively reengineer PR history in radical fashion. The toolkit will include such diverse perspectives as Durepos and Mills' (2012) creative adaption of ANT (Actor Network Theory) to offer an innovative model they call ANTi-history; Christian's (2011) "Big History" that extends considerations of the past into the Big Bang, biology, and geology; Black's (2015) counterfactuals that open up different pathways to perceiving less

deterministic histoire; De Landa's (2000) non-linear approach, and Olstein's (2015) imaginative phase transitions.

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EVALUATION OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION RESEARCHES IN TURKEY VIA GRADUATE THESES

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ABSTRACT

Communication and information transfer processes are at the core of institutional communication, which constitutes an important field of public relations, and this process refers to the relation of the whole environment of institutions. In this century ,more attention is paid to the importance of institutionalization and therefore corporate communication. For this reason, it has an important meaning for the sustainability of institutions' relations. On one hand institutions have had to follow the developments of institutional communication, on the othe hand academic studies have become mandatory in this area as an important application area of public relations. The graduate theses in the field have been evaluated within the scope of research because they have an important research area in the literature of corporate communication and can produce new information and suggestions.

The aim of the study is to demonstrate how the postgraduate theses, which are an important part of the institutional communication literature, are addressed within the scope of the issues and problems in the field. In this study, master's and doctoral theses that have been made in private and state universities in Turkey were examined. The theses examined were obtained from the Higher Education Institution (YÖK) electronic thesis archive. All data

obtained by searching under the heading "corporate communication" has been included in the survey. Obtained data were applied content analysis and the findings were presented. The research consists of two parts. In the first part, postgraduate theses prepared in the field of corporate communication were categorized according to years, universities, institutes, branches of education, languages and research methods. In the second part, the theses prepared in the field of corporate communication are divided according to the subjects and they are thematically examined. Corporate communication theses are thought to contribute to the field in terms of putting out a general profile.

Key Words: Corporate communication, public relations, postgraduate thesis, doctoral thesis, content analysis.

The Human Vs. The Artificial: Is Artificial Intelligence creating manipulative, opaque and unaccountable communications and communicators?

Edward Spence and Donald Alexander

Abstract

Humans are naturally curious, independent, mostly imaginative and reflective. However, it can be argued that humans are being turned into unreflective, unimaginative and controlled communicators as the introduction of artificial intelligence systems using machine learning takes control of how we manage our personal finances, how we vote and what we listen to, read, watch among other digital activities we engage in.

It is of course unarguable that the world-wide web has helped immeasurably in our decision making through making it easier to find holiday locations, books, music that personally interests us but it does also detract from our personal decision making as to what to source from the local farmer's market for food, or what news to watch, or what books to read or music to listen to.

Are we gradually handing control of our lives to machines without being aware of the ethical and human consequences? Is technology telling us and directing us of what to do and how to think? Do we have some basic controls over those who are developing the algorithms that are manipulating our bank and savings accounts? Spence (2013) asks questions about how technology can contribute to the "good life" and its impact on our well-being.

An example of the loss of control is an item from an Australian newspaper in late 2017 that the Australian Federal Department of Health had "unwittingly" exposed the private health records of millions of Australians as a result of a failure to de-identify their records. Imagine if your taxation records, driving licence details or bank account information had been made available publicly where criminals could access them. What control do we have over these ethical situations?

This paper is designed to supplement research in the engineering, electronics and robotic fields that are setting up guidelines to ensure future generations of engineers incorporate

ethical standards into their work. Similarly the communication field needs to be aware of the contribution it can make to the social sciences to protect human rights, ensure disempowered people are not further disadvantaged, ensure transparency and accountability, as well as learn how to detect and ameliorate any negative impacts on human well-being. From a critical communication perspective, corporate and government communication needs to be more actively transparent and accountable with concerns of equity and environmental and social sustainability taken into account (McKie & Munshi, 2007), as the trend to greater digital control of our lives by machines using AI counterweighs those humanist concerns and factors. What is needed is an ongoing critical and reflective dialogue between all disciplines and public input to actively question all that is presented to us as a fait- accompli.

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The European Citizens' Initiative in the EU: Empowerment Tool or Flop?

Erika Casajoana

ABSTRACT

My paper analyzes the results of 6 years of implementation of the European Citizens' Initiative and whether this citizens' empowerment tool has fulfilled its promise.

The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI), by the European Commission's definition, is: „an invitation to the European Commission to propose legislation on matters where the EU has competence to legislate".

A citizens' initiative has to be gather the support of one million EU citizens within one year, coming from at least ¼ of its member states. A minimum number of signatures is required in each of those member states.

The ECI's legal basis is the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007, but the first initiative was launched only in 2012 (Fraternité2020). But is was only able to gather 71,000 signatures.

After 6 years and some procedural reforms, only four initiatives out of a total of 48 have reached the required one million signatures in a year. Of those, just one has resulted in an actual legislative proposal: The 2012 initiative "Right2Water" on water rights. In February 2018, the European Commission initiated a proposal to review the European Directive on Drinking Water.

The European Commission admits it has often been too strict in its requirements for admissions. In fact, it has lost several lawsuits before the European Court of Justice for this reason.

The paper sets out to answer the following questions:

- Given the meager results in terms of legislative change, what is the cost/benefit analysis for associations and interest groups in launching an ECI? More concretely, does the typical ECI pay off as a lobbying tool? And as a public communication tool?

- Has the ECI, 6 years after its inception, fulfilled its promise as an instrument enabling EU citizens to participate directly in the development of EU policies?

- What do the four accomplished initiatives have in common? What can we learn from both sucessful and unsuccessful attempts to improve the achievement rate of ECIs?

I believe in the relevance of an analysis of the ECI, an instrument designed to enhance citizens' involvement and political participation in European Union affairs. I will deal with several case studies of ECIs and directly interview NGO officials who launched an ECI.

The ECI represents one important avenue for organizations trying to influence EU policy and/or communicate political goals to European public opinion. Efficient or not, it is here to stay.

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The Gender Component in Political Crises:

Crisis Communication amongst Female and Male Politicians

Esther Rinski-Cohen and Clila Magen

The following study engages in a systematic comparison of female and male politicians' crisis communication. Flipping the more common research currency in gender studies on its head, our focus lies on media choices in crises rather than the media representation of male vs. female politicians. Examining whether male and female politicians in Israel handle media crises differently and if so how, we conducted a qualitative comparative analysis of four pairs of male and female Israeli politicians in crisis, including interviews with politicians, their spokespeople, and other officials and full coverage of the crises in five newspapers. Each pairing was constructed on the basis of three criteria in order to increase the study's reliability: 1) Both politicians shared the same political status (minister, MP, etc.); 2) They faced a similar type of crisis; and 3) The crises occurred no more than five years of one another (2000–2016), thus precluding media changes that may have led to different media responses during the crises. The research focuses on legal crises, in which the politician was suspected of illegal activity and ethical crises—cases of dishonesty or immoral behavior.

The findings indicate that male and female politicians differ in their crisis communication. While insignificant gender disparities obtained in speed of response, consistency, and accessibility, differences existed in strategies, tactics, and openness. On the strategic level, female politicians demonstrated greater responsiveness than their male counterparts. On the tactical level, female politicians more frequently applied direct tactics, such as personal interviews or press conferences. With respect to media openness, female politicians exhibited greater openness and collaboration than male politicians, who generally gave more businesslike and laconic responses.

Zombie PR: Rethinking public relations and popular culture

Kate Fitch

This paper examines the complex intersections between public relations and popular culture. For cultural studies scholars, public relations, often organised around profit, is mostly reduced to propaganda, with little recognition of its entanglement with the popularisation of the everyday. Using the popular zombie trope, this paper highlights the need to re-theorise public relations and contemporary culture. The zombie is an ambiguous, polysemic term, one closely associated with globalisation, mass audiences, and marketisation. The resurgence of the zombie in the twenty-first century therefore offers rich material for thinking through public relations, the ways in which public relations engages with contemporary culture.

Public relations is increasingly understood from outside, and by critical scholars within, the discipline to propagate free market and neoliberal principles. For example, zombie science refers to the use of funded research as propaganda to further commercial aims. Public relations, then, is implicit in truth distortion and inauthenticity. By exploring the popular, in the resurgence in the zombie trope, and teasing out what it means for not just understanding the links between culture and public relations but for how we theorise public relations and its work furthering the processes of capitalism and consumption, this paper offers a critical scrutiny of the ways in which public relations is embedded in the neoliberal project.

PERCEPTION OF CORPORATE ADVERTISING AND ITS EFFECT ON CORPORATE IMAGE: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Corporate advertising, which is a type of public relations activity that institutions carry out with the purpose of making themselves and their activities known and improving corporate image, is an advertising method that has long been used in the world but has started to be preferred in recent years in Turkey. The aim of this study is to reveal how corporate advertisements are perceived and whether corporate image is influenced by corporate advertisements or not, if it is, in what way it is influenced. In this context, first of all, the concept of corporate advertising was touched upon, its relation with the corporate image was tried to be revealed and a case analysis was conducted through Akbank's 70th anniversary advertisement. In order to measure the perception of the advertisement and its effect on corporate image, a pre-test application was carried out with 60 subjects via face-to-face questionnaires, then the corporate advertising film of Akbank was followed and post-test application was performed. The questionnaire consists of three parts: semi-structured questions, the 'Corporate Image Scale' adapted from the work of Kissel and Büttgen (2015) and demographic characteristics. The universe of the research consists of university students and the sample of the study is Selçuk University, Silifke-Taşucu Vocational School and Tourist Guidance Program students. At the end of the study, a positive interaction between corporate advertising and corporate image has been observed.

Keywords: Corporate Advertising, Corporate Image, Public Relations

BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL PR CONFERENCE #8

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Abstract:

Perception plays a critical role in the reputation of an organisation, as it is the current identity that stakeholders base their opinions on.

Definition of terms and current literature seem to place perception as a specific indicator under certain communication and promotion situations, such as an issue, crisis or event, but is it not more of a general indicator for the current health of an organisations reputation!

Brand is how the organisations would like to be identified as.

Perception is how the stakeholders currently identify with the brand (the here and now, but a malleable public interpretation).

Reputation is the image the organisation is awarded over time (built over time).

However, when we break down the literature that defines influences on reputation, perception plays a substantial role in how stakeholders view an organisation is performing against their brand – and is a more immediate measure of the temperature for the reputation in that moment.

So are brand managers and PR practitioners focussing too much on reputation, and not paying enough attention to the temperature of perception?

Public Relations Intersections: Statues, Monuments, and Narrrative Continuity

By
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Abstract

Rhetorically, public relations provides the processes and rationale for why and how communities develop, promulgate, and use statues and monuments to establish narrative continuity. Narratives bind the past, present, and future by providing enactable continuity that implements culture to guide thought and action. Statues and monuments are particularly important in this regard, as can be demonstrated by practice in Imperial Rome and the USA, post-Civil War and Reconstruction. To develop that theme, this paper discusses how public relations' uses statues and monuments as textual resources to bind time so as to achieve narrative continuity of culture and personal/public policy. To justify this analysis, the ancient tri-part analysis of rhetoric grounds the discussion by featuring epideictic (ceremonial) rhetoric (issues of praise/blame) as means by which citizens honor exemplary acts on behalf of the state. [The other two types are deliberative (public policy issues) and forensic (guilt/innocence).] Since Aristotelian Greece, epideictic rhetoric have been used to celebrate (or condemn) exemplary contributions to society to define moral behavior. This analysis is extended by drawing on contemporary narrative rhetorical theory. Three eras are used to demonstrate the issue/cause related intersection of statues/monuments and public relations: One, the last 500 years of the Roman Empire, two, post-Civil War and Reconstruction (roughly 1880 to 1920) in the USA, three, recent efforts to remove symbols of the "South" and disrupt the narrative continuity of racial marginalization. The discussion of Rome sets the theoretical grounding for how statues, especially of emperors, were used to exemplify the ideal of leadership in the Empire. Soon after the US civil war (1860-1865) statues and monuments were erected to commemorate

military personnel: Central figures and military units. Fifty years later, at the height of Jim Crow reconstruction, proponents of the faith that the South will rise again, peppered the South with statues and eventually monuments (such as Stone Mountain) to honor the cause of the white south and restore its socio-economic dominance. That text champions the theme that the resilient South will rise again to continue its opposition to the "War of Northern Aggression" by resurrecting the (narrative continuity) glory of the old South and marginalizing African Americans. During the third era, the past two decades, a concerted effort was made to tear down, remove, or relocate statues as textual demonstration of moral failure of the narrative continuity of white supremacy and Reconstruction. Narrative continuity answers such questions as: What does it mean to be Roman, Southern and American?

Cultivating online relationships

Sharon Schoenmaker

Charles Sturt University

Abstract

The management of relationships is interdisciplinary, rather than an exclusive function of contemporary public relations activity. A range of disciplines are grappling with the issue of building relationships with others online, such as Human Resources, Health Services (Medicine, Physiotherapy and Allied Health), Marketing and Education. Much can be learned from investigating how other disciplines are making progress in this area and maximising the relationship building potential of the online space. Online relationships are dynamic and extremely difficult to quantify, as they are constantly changing in both nature and intensity, making the ability to compare relationships as outcomes from one period to the next virtually impossible. This research explores the heteroglossia of online participant voices of an Australian Government campaign about binge drinking that illustrates the range of tools participants were favouring when interacting online. These tools include: the use of personas, voice and language and different ways of connecting, responding and engaging. Discourse analysis (Gee, 2014) showed how participant voice and personae were used to establish connections. Findings from this analysis highlighted that Public Relations practitioners are adept at *connecting, engaging* and *responding*, but that the interactions fall short of *relating*. The findings of this study show that the public relations field still has work to do to in order to deliver on the fundamental goal for the profession: to build strong relationships with key stakeholders and publics. This research also suggests that practitioners may need to rethink current attempts at building online relationships, and whether this is a realistic proposition, given the complexities of the platform and those engaging with it.

TITLE: The use of metaphors in the construction of political discourses during the Catalonia's independence referendum

Silvia Caballero Hernández

ABSTRACT: The aim of this paper is to analyse how the political narratives have been constructed during the Catalonia's independence referendum of the 1st of October of 2017. Our mental pictures are highly truncated version of the vast world outside and politicians use metaphors to simplify events or issues and influence our collective imaginary. I will conduct a qualitative discourse analysis focusing on the use of metaphors on the Catalonian and the Spanish narrative on Twitter on the day of the referendum. Two completely different discourses that were constructed around an important event and which have an impact in people's perception about this conflictive issue and triggering a polarization in the public opinion.

I decided to analyse the accounts of both leaders because are the maximum representation of each side, the political parties to which the leaders belong to because represent the ideologies of both sides and the governments of Spain and Catalonia because are the representation of the executive brand of each nation

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Artificial intelligence and "Machine to Machine PR"

The revolution in artificial intelligence is regularly accompanied by warnings from within the scientific community. Luminaries including Stephen Hawking are alerting the public to potentially dangerous social consequences of technology that will be able to function and learn for itself without human intervention, including human redundancy in systems needed by humans to flourish or simply survive. Linked to the present emergence of AI is the future emergence of artificial consciousness: artificial agents (AA) aware of their own selfhood, and able to make choices based on their own aspirations and needs.

PR is already interacting with AA at a basic level, for instance by adjusting messages to meet the needs of search engine optimization or twitterbots. Algorithms are created to generate information or disinformation depending on the aims of the programmer. Achieving cooperation from enhanced AA equipped with self-directed publicity power presents PR with an engineering task, and will require support from neurology and cognitive sciences. AA with independent machine learning algorithms will build a much more sophisticated communication relationship in the public domain, and represent a changed balance of power between practitioner and technology.

This situation, long predicted by science fiction and now being realized by science, has enormous consequences for PR's basic understanding of its function. To some it may seem possible that PR will become redundant. My paper takes the opposite position, and proposes that public relations will take new forms, conducted between humans and machines, or human organizations and machines, or between the machines themselves.

The paper suggests that:

- A public domain for communication will continue to exist for reasons of individual autonomy and group cohesion

- Humans will continue to matter to organizations

- Building relations between organic, semi-organic and inorganic forms will be essential to overcoming the much-cited "uncanny valley" of alienation between them described in 1970 by the roboticist Masahiro Mori.[1]

- Artificial consciousness must include versions of emotion and subjectivity that will make public persuasion and dialogue a necessity between Artificial Agents (AA) and with other forms of individuality

- Individual ability to express and receive powerful forms of public communication because of neuroscience, cognitive science and technology will produce new forms of communication creativity, maintain a relationship with conscious machines and present new PR needs for organizations.

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Values in Communication Management of Corporate Social Responsibility Crisis

Pauline Paredes and Lluis Mas Manchón

Abstract Currently there are few values-oriented research, its theoretical record begins with Rokeach which is then expanded by Schwartz (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1996) who proposed a general theory of values. Even so, there is a gap in the use of values in public relations, but this study should be relevant, because these have become increasingly important, especially in the management of crisis communication and in the academic production with the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as object of study. However, other authors state, CSR studies are limited, thus suggesting a theoretical basis that increases the value of practices (Ozdora Aksak, Ferguson, & Atakan Duman, 2016). Likewise, Shim and Yang (2016) recommend that research should advance theories on effective strategies. On the other hand, organizations have a list of values at the corporate identity level, but in reality they are not reflected in the CSR (Schmeltz, 2014). According to this, we inquire about the relevance of values to conduct CSR crisis strategies. Moreover, the values are "desirable trans-situational objectives, which vary in importance and serve as a guiding principle in the lives of people" (Schwartz, 1996). The incorporation of values to CSR crisis management may add value and engagement to the communication with the publics involved, according to Grunig's classification (Grunig, 1997). This paper intertwines advances in values theory and CSR to pose an original approach to further the field of crisis management. This line of research can be insightful on the type of values practitioners may apply in crisis management communication. The methodology proposed has three phases, the preliminary phase is a content analysis of crisis management strategies. The second phase is reception test with the EVA Protocol (Rodríguez-Bravo et al., 2013). Finally, a semi experiment is designed to test the model of CSR values as hypothesis.

'Public Relations and the Cloud: A Critical Interrogation of a Growing Issue' by Dr Lukasz Swiatek and Dr Chris Galloway

In the last decade, cloud computing has grown in size and sophistication, and is now extensively used by organisations and individuals alike. This form of computer technology involves the delivery of services and hardware (ranging from remotely accessible email applications to customer relationship management platforms) through the Internet (Parthasarathy, 2013). Initially, in its 'technological sublime' (Nye, 1994) phase, the cloud was widely celebrated for its ability to save time, shrink distances, and save organisations and individuals money and resources. Now, however, concerns about this technology are rapidly growing. This paper critically examines the relationship between cloud computing and public relations. It makes two arguments. First, it contends that PR practitioners have paid insufficient attention to the problems created by this form of technology; indeed, for PR professionals, the cloud is still caught in a 'technological sublime' phase. Second, it argues that practitioners (and scholars alike) need to begin paying attention to this technology, due to the problems that it generates. Drawing on Mosco (2014), the paper outlines three of these most pressing concerns: the creation of significant epollution, the unjust treatment of labour, and the growth of significant surveillance and privacy issues (such as mass data breaches). These arguments are evidenced through various PR examples. The paper contributes to the field by critically examining an issue that has received very limited attention in public relations thinking and practice to date. The ideas raised in the paper are timely, and will only become more pressing over the next few years. Also, in drawing on the field of information technology, the paper speaks directly to the theme of the conference – 'critical intersections' – by interrogating an issue that requires interdisciplinary thinking. (Word count: 281 words, excluding title matter and references) References Mosco, V. (2015). To the cloud: Big data in a turbulent world. New York: Routledge Nye, D. E. (1994). American technological sublime. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press Parthasarathy, S. (2013). Potential Concerns and Common Benefits of Cloud-Based

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'Digital Labour Dilemmas for Public Relations'

Lukasz Swiatek and Chris Galloway

This paper examines a lacuna in the field of public relations: the growing concerns around the issues posed by digital labour. This type of labour is problematic because it is "alienated digital work"; that is, it involves Internet-based work that is "alienated from itself, from the instruments and objects of labour and from the products of labour" (Fuchs, 2014, 351f). It is also problematic because it facilitates ubiquitous labour that often takes place while individuals unwittingly pursue leisure and communication activities (Frayssé & O'Neil, 2015). Examples include engaging (unpaid) Internet users to produce articles for news organisations, and tasking fans of franchises to develop content as part of competitions. Little attention has been given to this issue by the field to date. The paper argues that public relations practitioners not only need to be aware of the problems posed by digital labour; they also need to take steps to ensure that they themselves, their organisations, and their clients mitigate (or completely avoid) those problems as they undertake their work. Actively enabling, as well as simply facilitating, digital labour can increasingly cause organisations substantial reputation damage. Drawing on various PR examples, the paper also suggests that the task of minimising or eliminating digital labour resides best with senior practitioners at the public relations management level; it is one of the tasks that may now be required to help get (and keep) the house in order (Heath & Palenchar, 2009). By examining a timely and growing issue, the paper makes a novel contribution to the field of public relations. It opens a new area of inquiry and contributes to practice. Additionally, by drawing on concepts related to cultural studies and information technology, it actively addresses the spirit of the conference by enabling 'critical intersections'. (Word count: 277 words, excluding title matter and references)

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Catching up with the Trend? A quantitative and qualitative analysis of LinkedIn presences and activities of German

Sebastian Michael Pfister

Social networking services nowadays play a significant role in the communication programs of companies and organisations (Capriotti & Ruesja, 2018). One of those services, the social business network LinkedIn, is becoming more and more popular, and CEO's and decision makers from all over the world are represented on the social network service. But the platform offers far more than just B2B communication. Nowadays, it is an essential tool in many application processes and can be used for employer branding, stakeholder engagement or to increase a company's transparency. And through their online activities, CEO's can positively influence their own authenticity and approachability, as Men and Tsai (2016) already explored. However, only 6 CEO's of the 30 most significant German companies have an account on the platform, and not even all of them run it on a frequent basis. To find out why German CEO's are present or not on LinkedIn, and for what purposes they use it, this study conducted a quantitative analysis on the general representation of German chairpersons on LinkedIn. So far, only insufficient studies on LinkedIn in Germany have been carried out. This study takes into account the number of followers, since when they are active, the number of posts they published or shared in 2018 and if their company is represented on LinkedIn as well. In a second part, four interviews with employees responsible for the companies' digital media presences have been conducted; two with employees whose CEOs are represented on LinkedIn, two with employees whose CEOs so far do not have an account on LinkedIn. The interviews aimed to get to know about the reasons for and against a digital presence on LinkedIn, possible insights into their digital media strategy and future aims. The results of the studies have not been evaluated so far. #Engagement #CEOs #socialnetworkservices #LinkedIn #CorporateCommunication #DigitalCommunication

PR Plus: Interdisciplinary methods to identify, create and test actionable sustainable futures.

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This paper builds on an earlier piece published in *PR Review* that argued for 'futures intelligence' in the practice and theory of public relations. Going beyond that original work, this paper uses the globally urgent issue of climate change to present an interdisciplinary approach for developing and testing a range of feasible zero or low carbon futures. Climate change is selected as a focus because it represents a serious threat to our way of life, internationally; it requires fundamental and disruptive economic and societal change; and yet so far there is no clear vision for achieving such a future. Significantly, the United Nations[2] and others[3] call for leadership to come from civil society, but we don't know how that can be achieved.

Disruptive change of this magnitude, if it is to be successful, is fundamentally reliant on communication, which is the domain of public relations professionals. Discourse, for example, plays a key role as competing societal beliefs, values and contexts shape our understandings of issues like climate change and, in turn, our shared values regarding change.[4] However, while groups such as political parties, business associations and social

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movements can coordinate their visions and strategies, along with mass media as intermediaries in driving both elite and popular support,[5] human behaviour is complex and sometimes irrational,[6] and responses to climate change remain highly contentious amongst a wide variety of national[7] and international actors.[8]

Given the scope of change required, and the diversity of needs, views, and geopolitical contexts, this paper introduces a novel, overlapping interdisciplinary approach that combines PR and communication with behavioural experimental methods and quantitative econometric modelling that, taken together, help identify, create and test the feasibility, sustainability[9] and societal acceptability of a range of possible low-carbon futures.[10] Because the long term viability and sustainability of policy decisions ultimately depend upon outcomes of societal wellbeing, measured at least in the first instance by levels of economic wellbeing, the futures preferences and associated actions are then subject to economic modelling that tests whether or not such actions would enhance, maintain or reduce levels of economic wellbeing – and for whom. In combination, these approaches go well beyond traditional communication based methods, such as stakeholder engagement, to not only integrates the views of a wide range of expert stakeholders and lay citizens but also to address pragmatic issues of policy making and societal action. In this way it provides a

[5] Jessop, 2010 (see note 10); Levy & Spicer, 2013 (see note 10).
   Roper, J., Ganesh, S., & Zorn, T. E. (2016). Doubt, Delay, and Discourse: Skeptics' Strategies to Politicize Climate Change. *Science Communication*, *38*(6), 776-799.
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[7] Roper, J. (2012). Environmental risk, sustainability discourses, and public relations. *Public Relations Inquiry, 1*(1), 69-87.
[8] Garnaut, R. (2010). Policy Framework for Transition to a Low-Carbon World Economy. *Asian Economic Policy Review*, *5*(1), 19-33.
[9] Hanley, N., Oxley, L., Greasley, D., McLaughlin, E. & Blum, M. (2016). Empirical Testing of Genuine Savings as an Indicator of Weak Sustainability: A Three-Country Analysis of Long-Run Trends. *Environmental & Resource Economics*, 63(2), 313-338.
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[10] Kunnas, J., McLaughlin, E., Hanley, N., Greasley, D., Oxley, L. & Warde, P. (2014). Counting carbon: historic emissions from fossil fuels, long-run measures of sustainable development and carbon debt. *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 62(3), 243-265.

platform from which future possibilities can be imagined, tested and recast as business and governmental policy.

The initial range of low or zero carbon futures for a specific national context – in this case, New Zealand, is built upon research of critical junctures and historical turning points to examine what factors triggered change and the key discourses that accompanied them. This paper describes each overlapping phase of the futures research, from initial trend analysis and scenario development to testing, and from identification of preferred outcomes to action through design thinking.

Intelligent project participation: Strategic communication and interdisciplinary interventions in engineering education

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In line with the conference theme, this paper seeks to challenge disciplinary silos but with a distinctive applied focus. Instead of engineering consent, we look at using strategic communication to intervene productively in the education of engineers. The paper is part of an ongoing project and will begin by discussing preliminary results from a research intervention based on project management in a small electrical engineering course. Our reflections on the early findings suggests different approaches, including the concept of intelligent participation, to project management that have relevance in and beyond educating engineers. We also discuss how the lessons are being used to inform a second research proposal on a much larger mechanical engineering course. Finally, we look to explore how strategic communication-based interdisciplinarity might influence larger scale changes in education engineering that are also relevant to strategic communication projects.

Tittle:

Creating the habit of recycling in early childhood: how education and public relations can work together

Pilar Buil, Olga Roger-Loppacher, Mireia Tintoré y Vanessa Prieto-Sandova.

Abstract:

Sustainability education and environmental communication campaigns are key concepts to achieve the Circular Economy, launched by EU in 2015 and based on the 3Rs principle (reduce, reuse and recycle). Specifically, the recycling component is one of the well-known priorities for the European Union. Even though many programs have been developed to increase recycling rates, part of the population is not still in the habit of recycling their waste. The recycling rate could be improved with the education of future generations. Public Relations and Education are two disciplines that could interact together perfectly to achieve this goal. The aim of this study is to create and test educational materials (Teaching Units) to develop environmental behaviour in early childhood (under six years old).

Furthermore, the research also studies the effects that the activities designed have on teachers, families, educative centre and neighbourhood. The study was conducted to find out the knowledge and attitude towards recycling of the teachers and the kids before and after the implementation of the new Teaching Unit in several schools in Córdoba (Spain). In the case of the kids, there was a second evaluation after 15 days to verify if they have acquired the new skill. Moreover, focus groups were developed with teachers and parents of the children in order to find out in detail how the experience has affected them, the school and the families. This study provides an exciting opportunity to increase children's knowledge, awareness, and intention of recycling, and to transmit "recycling culture" to their families and the educative community.

Public relations outcomes in health organizations

Marca, Guillem; Oliveira, Andrea; Frigola, Joan

The update of the Barcelona Declaration (2015) insists on the measurement of outcome results more tan the measurement of outputs. Several authors have identified KPI linked to this type of results such as sales, market share, cost savings, leads generated, customer loyalty, donations, registrations, talent retention and recruitment, brand engagement, revenue among others. This type of outcomes can be used in most organizations; however, in health service provider organizations they need another type of outcomes that can be linked to their communication and public relations programs. Only Paine (2015) identifies "number of lives saved" as an outcome that can be linked to this type of organization.

In parallel to the process of crystallization of public relations metrics, in the field of health patient experience appears in the centre of health care (Salomon, 2014). It is defined as the sum of all interactions, shaped by the organization's culture, that influence the perceptions of the patient through the continuity of care (Wolf et al., 2014), moving away from the scope of biomedicine to encompass a multidisciplinary area in which interaction, relationships, communication, expectations or engagement transfer the main role to the social sciences, specifically to public relations.

The goal of the study was to identify public relations outcomes linked to patients' experience through an in-depth review of the studies selected by Doyle, Lennox and Bell, 2018. The results showed that communication was in the core of the patient experience in most of the studies and all except three included terms related to communication or its semantic field. Clinical outcomes linked to the dialogical framework of public relations were identified with significant associations to treatment compliance or medication communications among others.

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