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The Use of Rhetoric in Public Relations: Kenneth Burke's Theory of Identification and Consubstantiality

Chonticia Y. Jackson
Kennesaw State University

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The Use of Rhetoric in Public Relations: Kenneth Burke's Theory of Identification and
Consubstantiality

By

Chonticia Jackson

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the

Requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Professional Writing in the Department of
English

In the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of Kennesaw State University

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College of Humanities & Social Sciences
Kennesaw State University
Kennesaw, Georgia
Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the Capstone Project of

Chonticia Jackson

Has been approved by the committee
for the capstone requirement for

the Master of Arts in Professional Writing
in the Department of English

At the (month and year) graduation

May 2013

Capstone committee:

Anne Moore

Member

W. Todd Hays

Member

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Introduction

The purpose of this capstone portfolio is to demonstrate the importance and use of rhetoric in the field of public relations.

I wrote all sample documents and included them to demonstrate my ability to research, gather information, and effectively use rhetorical language to create public relations documents. The sample documents are located in the Appendix section after the essay portion. I will use Kenneth Burke's "Theory of Identification and Consubstantiality" to analyze documents and explain how I used a rhetorical approach to provoke interest and prompt responses and actions from the target audience. The collection of documents includes two SWOT analyses, a media analysis, a public relations plan, three news releases, two direct mail letters, and an issue-based feature story. These documents demonstrate my progress in writing during my college career and show my ability to create public relations documents. The order of the individual document analyses in the essay follows the order in which the documents appear in the Appendix.

I will also discuss the practice of public relations, contents of media kits, and organizational goals. This capstone project will complete my requirements for the Master of Arts in Professional Writing.

The Practice of Public Relations

To understand rhetoric used in public relations, one must first understand the practice of public relations. Communication theorist Robert L. Heath (2001) states "the practice of public relations is the management function that rhetorically adapts organizations to people's interests and people's interests to organizations by co-creating meaning and co-managing culture to achieve mutually beneficial relationships" (p. 36). The term "*mutually beneficial*" is important

in the study of rhetoric in public relations. Both parties, the organization/company AND the targeted public, must gain from the relationship. For instance, when a consumer purchases a product or service from a company, the company's need for revenue and the consumer's need for the product or service are satisfied. When a citizen donates or volunteers with a nonprofit organization, both the nonprofit's need for resources and the citizen's need to contribute to a worthy cause are satisfied. This symbiotic relationship between the organization and target audience cannot be created, developed or nurtured without an appropriate public relations campaign.

The most important part of a public relations campaign is the media kit. The media kit is the vehicle used to deliver information to the target audience. Media kits contain any combination of the following documents: news release, company history, biography, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), fact sheet, feature story, scripts for public service announcements/commercials, etc. The goals are to promote goodwill, create or increase awareness, control damage created by a crisis, change attitudes toward the organization and launch products or services. The public relations practitioner must decide which goals apply based on audience and types of documents.

If the campaign goal is to create awareness, the target audience will consist of people unaware of the organization and issue. If the goal is damage control or changing attitudes toward the organization, the audience will consist of people familiar with the organization, but they may have a negative perception due to a crisis. In the case of crisis communication, a campaign focused solely on creating awareness isn't appropriate. During a crisis, the audience may receive negative information or inaccurate details via the media or rumor mill. It is the

public relations practitioner's job to minimize damage. Goals determine the type of rhetoric used in a campaign. If the rhetoric is successful, the organization will meet its goals.

Kenneth Burke's Theory of Identification

To persuade a target audience, the public relations practitioner must connect with that audience on some level. This connection can be achieved through identification. Identification is the feeling of relating to a person, issue or organization. Identification can result from empathy, sense of community or feeling of responsibility created by rhetoric. One rhetorical theory that can be applied to the idea of prompting action through identification in persuasive public relations campaigns is Kenneth Burke's "Theory of Identification and Consubstantiality" in Part I of his book *Rhetoric of Motives* written in 1950. I will use Burke's theory to further explain the use of rhetoric in public relations.

Burke uses the term "identification" to distinguish his theory from the traditional term "persuasion." He does not dismiss the traditional Aristotelian idea of persuasion, but instead uses his theory as an extension of the traditional definition. To explain his theory, Burke asks us to imagine two subjects whom he calls "Subject A" and "Subject B." Subject A is not identical to Subject B, but if their interests are joined, Subject A is *identified* with Subject B. Burke states that A is "substantially one" with B. Subject A and Subject B remain individuals, but they have common interests (Burke, 1969, p. 1020). This means Subject A and Subject B live separate lives and may have differing viewpoints about life, social issues or politics, but they can come together to work toward a common goal. A person with an upper middle class background who grew up in the suburbs, went to private school and attended college can share a common interest

with a working class person who grew up in the inner city, went to public school and never attended college.

Divisions occur because human beings are born and exist separately, but they seek to identify with others through communication. From a contemporary perspective, Burke sees human interaction as more complex than the term “persuasion” suggests. Identification is a process necessary to human communication. Burke (1969) states that we are “both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with one another” (p. 1020).

Burke explains consubstantiality as follows:

“While consubstantial with its parents, with the ‘firsts’ from which it is derived, the offspring is nonetheless apart from them. In this sense, there is nothing abstruse in the statement that the offspring both is and is not one with its parentage. Similarly, two persons may be identified in terms of some principle they share in common, an ‘identification’ that does not deny their distinctness” (Burke, 1969, p. 1020).

Burke means that each individual is part of a whole, but individual characteristics are not minimized or erased. Children come from their parents and as they grow, parents impart their identities, rules, ideas, values, knowledge, and beliefs on their children. As children get older, they develop their own identities, rules, ideas, values, knowledge, and beliefs, some of which may differ from those of their parents. Differing viewpoints are an extension of the child’s individual identity, but the child remains part of the parents.

The political process is another example of Burke's consubstantiation theory. Two citizens may come from different socioeconomic backgrounds and have different political views and party affiliations, but during an election, both parties function as part of the voting public. The common goal is participation in the process. Both individuals seek to have a voice in selecting representatives and choosing how the government functions.

Burke sought to broaden the definition and uses of rhetoric. Gregory Hansen of Indiana University (1996) writes that "Burke uses Aristotle's approach as a model when he orients his writing about language specifically to its social context" (p. 50). Burke's primary interest in identification is an appeal to speaker's ethos as discussed in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (Hansen, 1996, p. 51). Hansen means that Burke is utilizing Aristotle's model, but defining rhetorical language in a broader way from a social perspective.

From Burke's perspective, communication is a means for establishing and maintaining a social life. Dr. Brooke L. Quigley of the University of Memphis (1998) writes that Burke considers human beings "actors" and language is one way in which human beings socially communicate (p. 1). "To overcome our division, we look for ways in which our interests, attitudes, values experiences, perceptions and material properties are shared with others" (Quigley, 1998, p. 1). Quigley means that human beings continually seek to associate with other individuals or groups to establish position in the social hierarchy.

Burke's explanation of identification and consubstantiality can be applied in public relations because the goal of the campaign is not to strip target audience members of their unique identities, but to present information and provoke action that will bring the same individuals

together for a common cause. For example, a social issue can bring target audience members together to do their part for the betterment of the community.

Lawrence B. Rosenfeld explored Burke's theory in "Set Theory: Key to the Understanding of Kenneth Burke's Use of the Term 'Identification.'" Rosenfeld (1969) stated that Burke wrote "You persuade a man insofar as you talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, *identifying* your ways with his" (p. 175). In this quote Burke assigns the same level of importance to identification already assigned to speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, and idea in the practice of rhetoric. Rosenfeld also mentioned consubstantiality stating "things are consubstantial if they share the same nature or substance" (p. 176). Consubstantiation is the feeling of "oneness" or unity created by rhetorical language.

In public relations, the language used should make the target audience feel consubstantial with the writer, subject or cause. Proper use of information and language is imperative when creating identification and consubstantiality between the audience and the subject.

When promoting a service, event, cause or product via news releases, direct mail letters, and feature stories, the language must bring a need to the attention of the audience. This need is another form of identification. This may be volunteers or donors needed by a nonprofit to continue operations or a product or service offered by a company and needed by the reader to make life easier or more enjoyable. When creating awareness of social issues like racism, sexism, domestic violence, animal cruelty, poverty or other controversial topics, the language must prompt the audience to act without projecting guilt for lacking knowledge or being aware of the issue, but not acting on that awareness sooner.

Most of the samples in this portfolio were created for nonprofit organizations and written to appeal to the reader's emotions and/or sense of community. The emotional appeal and sense of community were used to identify the reader with a person, cause or organization. I will discuss Burke's theory where appropriate.

Research for Public Relations

Any public relations campaign must begin with research. The public relations practitioner must conduct research to determine the audience for the message.

Public relations research tools include surveys, focus groups, SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses, and public relations plans. Though information gathered from research is often technical and quantitative in nature, rhetoric can still be present in the topics, questions, possible answers, compilation techniques, and the way results are presented. For instance, participants in a focus group may be asked to choose between two or more similar products of different brands. The more options participants have, the higher the possibility results will vary.

The type of campaign is based on audience behavior in a particular industry. Audience behaviors are reflected in sales/donation increases or decreases, loss or gain of volunteers, employee turnover, event attendance, complaints, etc. Campaigns must be adjusted for varying audiences. For instance, a campaign aimed toward college students would differ from a campaign aimed toward senior citizens. The values and needs of each demographic are different so public relations practitioners must tailor the campaigns to appeal to the appropriate audiences. A bank's campaign to bring in new customers may focus on saving money for both demographics, but approaches to each campaign will differ based on the reasons potential

customers want to save money. The campaign aimed at the college students might focus on their desire to have more money to do fun things like go out with friends. The campaign aimed at senior citizens may focus on their desire to grow their retirement funds. Each scenario presents a different reason for the specified audience member to identify with the message.

Hansen (1996) states that Burke interprets identification as the use of language to negotiate identity within groups (p. 52). “Using the simile of drama to illustrate everyday social realities, Burke argues that language paradoxically creates interdependent identities among people in the same way that characters in a play mutually allow each other to enact their roles ” (Hansen, 1996, p. 52). Interdependent identities, identities that are mutually dependent, are created based on a person’s place in society. Consumer purchases, marital status, charitable donations, hobbies, employment, and other personal factors determine a person’s place in society.

Surveys

In order to create identification between OWL Radio and listeners, management had to determine the kind of music listeners desired. Burke (1951) states “identification can also be an end as when people earnestly yearn to identify themselves with one group or other” (p. 203). In distributing the OWL Radio survey, management hoped to include listeners in the decision making process so they feel they are part of OWL Radio and instrumental to OWL Radio’s success. Listener opinion is an important and necessary factor in establishing and maintaining OWL Radio’s identity.

The survey process is an example of Burke’s idea that people identify in different ways. According to Quigley (1998), Burke states that “one way human beings identify is by sharing

vicariously in the role of leader or spokesperson” (p. 2). As the station program director, my goal was to determine the kind of programming current and potential listeners desire. As a manager, I served as one of OWL Radio’s leaders within the organization. Fulfilling my responsibility of creating the survey, gathering results and presenting the results to the OWL Radio Board of Directors and station staff allowed me to act as the “spokesperson” for the listeners. By speaking for the listeners, I allowed them to “share vicariously” in my dual role as leader and spokesperson. My job was to ensure their opinions were heard and adjust programming to reflect the results so we kept current listeners and gained new listeners.

Audiences for the survey included students, faculty and staff. The classic genres received the most votes. The survey results showed consubstantiality among listeners. In his analysis of Burke’s theory, Professor Thomas B. Harte (1977) states “it is also through acting together that men have common sensations, concepts, images and attitudes which make them consubstantial” (p. 65). People enjoy listening to classic music because it reminds them of good times in their lives. Music has sentimental value because it represents specific moments in time. Whether the listener prefers hip-hop, rock, R&B, or Top 40/Pop, oldies evoke nostalgia, which is one of the common sensations Harte mentioned.

Listeners enjoy reminiscing about childhood, games and toys, high school friends, concerts attended, family gatherings and other experiences from a simpler time. Common images from that time may include popular posters of a favorite musician, actor or actress, music videos, and memorable scenes from favorite movies and television shows. The common experience of a specific time period allows people to identify with each other. The listener may enjoy other genres, which is indicative of individuality, but there is a kinship that draws in and

bonds the listener to disk jockeys who play the music as well as other listeners who enjoy that genre.

Once the general manager and I gathered and analyzed the information from the surveys, we discussed the results and hired team members based on those results. We added retro shows to the programming schedule to address survey results.

SWOT Analysis

Once research is complete, the practitioner takes the information and begins the SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis is the foundation of the public relations media kit. It is the most commonly used format for research results. The goal of the SWOT analysis is to determine organizational strengths the practitioner can utilize, weaknesses that can be minimized, opportunities the practitioner can capitalize upon, and threats that can be averted.

The first SWOT analysis was part of a mock plan for a new small business offering affordable writing services to other small businesses and nonprofit organizations. The focus on small businesses and nonprofits creates a sense of community by providing services that may otherwise be unaffordable due to lack of funds. Offering services at reasonable rate enables the organization to meet goals more efficiently while keeping resources in the community.

The second SWOT analysis was part of a media kit for Men Stopping Violence (MSV). MSV addresses domestic violence from the unique angle of changing the way abusers treat and think about women. Burke (1950) describes rhetoric as “the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents” (p. 42). In the MSV campaign, I acted as the agent described by Burke. My goal was to induce the desired actions, volunteering,

purchasing services and donating, from the target audience by presenting information from a different angle.

Identification in the form of sense of community is created by donors and volunteers who believe in the organization's mission. The issue of domestic violence is a social problem that cannot be resolved without cooperation from the community. Identification can also occur among those who have experienced domestic violence personally, witnessed domestic violence during childhood or know of friends or relatives who have experienced domestic violence.

Public Relations Plans

Once the SWOT information is gathered, the practitioner creates the public relations plan based on that information. The public relations plan explains the steps to be taken in the campaign. The plan for MSV details the steps taken to create awareness and prompt people to donate or volunteer with the organization.

The public relations plan for MSV begins with descriptions of the organization's situation, audiences, objectives, strategies, and tactics. The situation addressed is lack of recognition which means the objective is creation of awareness.

The audiences for the MSV campaign include victims, offenders, family and friends of victims and offenders, police officers, probation officers, parole officers, attorneys, judges, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, therapists, clergy, and the general public. The target audience and partner organizations form a consubstantial community working toward the common goal of eliminating domestic violence. Partnerships within the legal community and justice system work to MSV's advantage because the programs and volunteer opportunities offer offenders the opportunity to receive therapy while completing community service. The plan

suggests that MSV also partner with well known charity organizations that already have an audience.

Strategies and tactics are addressed next in the MSV public relations plan. Small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other business entities with limited funds must attempt to build relationships with traditional media outlets, but social media networks are the easiest and cheapest way to distribute information to a large audience. Social media is another tool of identification because people utilize networks like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others to receive information, connect with family, friends, and co-workers as well as make friends. Mass e-mails, blogs, and message boards are other internet sources an organization can use to distribute information.

Burke's "new rhetoric" can be applied to social media language. Tonja Mackey of *The Journal of Kenneth Burke* (2012) states that when Facebook users post a status, they are making comments about society or themselves in relation to society just as Burke did in his writings (p. 2). "In actuality these users are constructing their versions of reality through this online social venue, which can be compared to Kenneth Burke's argument that language is a creator of and response to what is going on in the world" (Mackey, 2012, p. 2). Mackey means that when Facebook users post their opinions and their friends respond to the posting, that interaction between the parties is a modern version of Burke's argument. Social media is a useful tool in gauging public opinion.

As shown on the second page of the MSV public relations plan, once strategies and tactics are decided, the next step is to set up a reasonable timeline for completion as well as deciding on a realistic budget. Approximate cost of supplies can be estimated by researching

prices on different web sites like OfficeDepot.com, OfficeMax.com and Staples.com. If retail prices are too expensive for the budget, stores like Big Lots may offer the same supplies at cheaper costs. Labor costs are determined by the organization's available funds. If there aren't funds available for extra personnel, volunteers are needed to perform necessary duties.

The public relations plan is a map for the campaign. The steps taken in the campaign are presented to management and employees so they know what is required to make the campaign successful.

Media Analysis

The media analysis differs from the SWOT Analysis because the media analysis was performed without actual research. It was created from a hypothetical damage control standpoint. The media analysis for the National Basketball Association (NBA) was created to present a hypothetical campaign strategy to keep fans interested and make employees feel secure in their jobs during the 2011 Player Lockout.

Fan and employee morale usually weaken during times of strikes or lockouts. The uncertainty creates uneasiness among employees because they're not sure what kind of impact work stoppages may have on their job security. The longer the lockout lasts, the more money the NBA loses. Significant financial losses could result in layoffs or bankruptcy. The communities in which teams are located could also be negatively affected. If games are not played, area businesses like restaurants, bars, retail shops, and local partner organizations could be negatively impacted. In this situation, identification and consubstantiality are needed to bridge divisions.

Professor George Cheney's analysis of Burke's identification theory in relation to organizational communication (1983) states, "As an individual response to the divisions in

society, a person *acts* to identify with some target(s), i.e., persons, families, groups, collectivities; and to a lesser extent, values, goals, knowledge, activities, objects” (p. 145). In the case of the NBA Lockout, the primary division is between the organization and the players who are represented by the Players Association.

The Lockout occurred because Commissioner David Stern wanted to reduce player salaries and institute a salary cap to save money for the league. The Players Association did not agree with this proposal and as a result management implemented a lockout until both sides could come to an agreement. During the lockout, no NBA games were played resulting in a shorter season and ticket revenue losses.

The secondary divisions are between the organization and fans as well as the organization and its employees. Burke (1950) also mentions divisions stating “identification is compensatory to division” (p. 22). This means that people compensate for these societal separations by identifying with a common organization, person or cause. In the case of the lockout, the common cause was a resolution to the disagreement between management and players. Both fans and employees had a vested interest in a resolution.

Fans and employees were two different target audiences that needed to be addressed. League management was aware that fans were unhappy with the lockout because fans expressed discontent via blogs, social networks like Facebook and Twitter and the NBA web site. Cheney (1983) states that identification arises as a “communicative, cooperative response” (p. 145). Once the campaign is implemented, management would hope to get such a response from employees and fans.

There were no noticeable increases in employee turnover at the time the analysis was performed, but that could have changed depending on the length of the lockout. The media analysis suggests team meetings assuring employees their jobs are safe and additional charity events to show that the league still cares about the fans and the community. Employee incentives and cross-training opportunities are also suggested to show employees that the league values them enough to continue investing in them. Burke's theory applies because initiatives suggested in the media analysis represent league management's attempts to remain substantial or united with fans and employees in a time of crisis. A major loss of employees and fans would be detrimental to the league. An appropriate campaign would reinforce the idea that the league, employees and fans are partners who have a mutual interest in a lockout resolution.

The media analysis is an important tool for the public relations practitioner because it can be done before major damage is done, money is spent, or hard research is conducted. It's based on a hypothetical situation in preparation for a crisis. This tool can be used to estimate the amount of work involved and the cost of a campaign before implementation.

News Releases

The purpose of a news release is to create awareness of an organization, event or product launch. Once created, news releases are forwarded to media outlets including radio stations, television networks, magazines and newspapers. Once the news release is sent to appropriate media outlets, the public relations practitioner seeks to get the program director or editor's attention so the news release can become a news spot, advertisement, public service announcement, or commercial.

The news release must be relatively short because airtime and print space are limited. Longer news releases are often overlooked by program directors and editors. The practitioner must get the message across in one to one and a half pages. The more exposure for the organization, event, service, or product, the more likely desired results can be achieved. The goal is to create awareness that will prompt action from the public. Actions include donating, volunteering, attending an event or purchasing a product or service.

The goal of the OWL Radio news release was to create awareness that the school has a radio station that serves as a training ground for students who plan to go into radio, television, marketing, public relations, and other related fields. Prior to 2007, Kennesaw State University had no television facility, radio station or broadcasting classes. The focus of the Communication Program was teaching writing and theory. Kennesaw State was at a disadvantage when competing for new students. Both Georgia State University and University of Georgia have radio and television facilities where students gain valuable experience. The addition of the radio station and production classes put Kennesaw State on a more level playing field with Georgia State and University of Georgia, which are the top two schools in the state.

It was important to mention in the OWL Radio news release that jobs aren't only open to Communication majors. Inclusivity ensures that OWL Radio has a larger pool of candidates when hiring. Marketing students can work on the promotions team, sales and business students can work on the underwriting team and Sport Management majors can work on the sports team. OWL Radio is a valuable training ground for these students as well. The invitation for non-communication students to work for OWL Radio is another example of the identification that brings people together for the common cause of staffing the station. Professor Thomas B. Harte (1977) states that through use of identifications, "the speaker establishes a rapport with his

audience, causing it to identify its interests with his” (p. 65). As the speaker mentioned by Harte, I presented outside students with an additional internship option. I aligned management’s interest in gaining employees with the students’ interest in gaining experience.

Creating awareness of the station and available positions is an ongoing job for management because there’s an influx of new students every semester. Many incoming students don’t know Kennesaw State has a radio station. The goal of the OWL Radio news release is to inform students, faculty, and staff of the existence of the station. Once informed, students may want to work there and university faculty and staff may want to donate, volunteer and listen. Hiring students benefits the station and the students. Those contributing to the station form a secondary community within the primary university community. Cheney (1983) states that identification is the way in which people are “inclined to communicate and cooperate with persons and groups who share the same interests” (p. 146). The success and survival of the station is the common interest shared by employees, volunteers, and listeners. The station functions on a limited budget from which only directors and managers can be paid so volunteers are instrumental to the operation of OWL Radio. The relationship between the station and the volunteers is another example of a mutually beneficial relationship.

The second news release was created for the Surfrider Foundation. The Surfrider Foundation is a nonprofit organization that works to preserve Georgia’s beaches. The purpose of the release was to inform the public of the existence of the organization and explain the organization’s mission.

In the first paragraph, the focus is providing information. Once the reader is informed, the next step is to draw the reader in by explaining that negative forces like pollution can impact

Georgia's beaches. Surrounding communities could also be negatively affected. If beaches are closed or restricted, the tourism industries in those areas lose revenue. Citizens who work in those industries would be in danger of losing their livelihoods.

Identification, as defined by Burke, is presented to the Surfrider target audience. Cheney (1983) states that organizations help "facilitate identification through their myriad means of communication. Simply put, an individual who is inclined to identify with an organization or organizational subunit will be open to persuasive efforts from various sources within that unit" (p. 146). The target audience is made aware of the organization and its missions and identifies with others who care about the environment and want to keep the beaches clean. No matter where they reside, citizens utilize and take pride in Georgia beaches. Whether parents are taking their children on family trips to Tybee Island or college students are enjoying Spring Break on St. Simons Island, people can appreciate the importance of protecting Georgia's beaches. As in other sample documents, the goal is to make the audience care enough about beaches to inquire, donate and volunteer.

The news release is the foundation of the media kit. News releases are fairly short, but detailed and can be submitted to many media outlets. The more outlets that receive the news release, the higher the possibility that at least one outlet will turn it into a print ad, commercial or public service announcement. Print ads, commercials and public service announcements, whether on the radio or television, are seen and heard by large audiences.

Direct Mail Letters

Direct mail letters are similar to news releases. They provide the same information, but since these pieces are directly mailed to a selected audience, they can be longer and include more

details. Direct mail letters can also utilize more direct and emotional language than news releases. A mailing list must be compiled or purchased before a direct mail campaign can be implemented.

Mailing lists can be created from residential or business phone listings, purchased from a source that compiles lists or created from a current customer base. If a new business is opening, the practitioner would either create a mailing list from residential or business listings or purchase a list because the customer base does not exist yet. If the owner of an existing business wants to launch a new product or service, the practitioner uses the current customer base to create a mailing list. The current customer base is a built-in audience that already knows and patronizes the business.

Dr. Peter Smudde addresses Burkes' ideas about public relations in "Implications on the Practice and Study of Kenneth Burke's Idea of a Public Relations Counsel with a Heart." Smudde (2004) states "To meet someone's needs—to achieve consubstantiality—increases the probability that the message will be accepted and understood, then subsequently acted upon" (p. 427). The direct mail letter created for WRFG Community Radio demonstrates how meeting the audience's needs increases the chances that listeners will donate and volunteer.

WRFG meets the listener's needs by providing diverse programming that appeals to many types of Atlanta residents. The goal was to reiterate that WRFG provides a unique service. The diverse programming meets a need of the target audience.

Within the context of Burke's *Attitudes Toward History*, Smudde explains that a public relations practitioner is not just a reporter of situations, but a humanist whose focus is on "inducing cooperation between an organization and its publics" (p. 423). In direct mail letters,

cooperation is induced with language. In the greeting on the first page of the WRFG direct mail letter, the phrase “your non-commercial, educational, community radio station needs your help with donations and volunteers” is used to speak to the audience in a direct and personal way. The use of “your” is intended to make the reader feel invested in the success of WRFG because the station can’t survive without listeners, volunteers and donors.

In the “Brief History” section, highlights of the station’s past programming are presented to impress upon the reader WRFG’s importance in the history of the Little Five Points neighborhood and the city of Atlanta. The diversity of the station’s programming is also explained. A listener who didn’t reside in Atlanta during the rebellion at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary could still appreciate the importance of WRFG’s coverage of that event.

The “Benefits of Becoming a Member” section explains to the audience that donations and volunteers enable WRFG to continue its mission to “deliver progressive information and global entertainment to diverse listening audiences.” That phrase was used to make the reader feel that donating and volunteering fulfills a responsibility to the community. Donors and volunteers ensure that WRFG’s diverse programming continues.

The direct mail letter created for Georgia Animal Project (GAP) was used in a campaign to inform the public of low cost spaying and neutering services offered. GAP seeks to dispel myths about the process and results of spaying and neutering while providing accurate information about the benefits.

Smudde (2004) states that “at a basic level, the more a message affects people personally and projects a sense of urgency, the more likely they are to pay attention to it and potentially act on it” (p. 428). The greeting “Dear Friend” was used to instantly endear audience members and

draw them into the cause. The lead paragraph begins with “Approximately 30,000 animals will be killed in shelters in the state of Georgia this year.” This sentence was used to shock the audience and project the sense of urgency Smudde mentioned. The goal is to immediately evoke a sense of responsibility for animals.

This news release shows another example of identification directed toward pet owners and animal lovers who may not own pets. Pet owners may be concerned about their pets wandering, reproducing or possibly being diagnosed with cancer later in life. This concern will prompt the target audience to help the organization with its mission.

The next sentence states “This news is grim, but there’s something you, your family and friends can do about it.” This sentence was used to inform the readers that they have the power to do something to save animals facing euthanasia.

Direct mail letters are a cost effective way for an organization to get information to a selected audience without needing approval from media gatekeepers. Though not every recipient will read the letter and utilize the information, even a small percentage would create awareness and possibly build the foundation for a new customer base.

Feature Stories

The goal of a feature is to tell a story or inform the public. “Slice of life” features tell biographical stories about people who lead unique lives. Issue-based features create awareness. Feature stories about a company or organization inform the public of the history and mission. Features are included in media kits in hopes that magazines or newspapers will print them. They’re longer than news releases and contain more information, but may still be short in length due to limited space.

The feature included in the samples is an issue-based story titled “Have You Seen Me?” The goal of this feature was to show the discrepancy between national media coverage of missing white women and national media coverage of missing minority women. This feature is an example of Burke’s theory that identification can be created through “antithesis.” Cheney states that identification through antithesis is “the act of uniting against a common enemy” (p. 148). The common enemy would be the media because of disproportionate news coverage of missing women of color.

In “Have You Seen Me?” the lead paragraph emphasizes the similarities between Laci Peterson’s case, which most of the public is familiar with, and Evelyn Hernandez’s case, which is not as known on a national level. The comparison was used to immediately capture the reader’s attention.

The similarity between Hernandez’s case and Peterson’s case was also used to evoke empathy. Empathy allows the readers to identify with Evelyn Hernandez by imagining how they would feel if a loved one went missing and was eventually found murdered, but their family was unable to get national media coverage to help solve the crime.

On the second page of the story, stereotypes are explored as a reason for the disparity in news coverage of missing women. Movies, music videos and reality television are cited as sources that keep certain stereotypes about minority women alive. For example, *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*, a reality program on Bravo TV, often shows African-American cast members arguing and fighting. This show and others like it stay on the air because a certain segment of the viewing public enjoys conflict. Cast members embody the stereotype of the loud, argumentative black woman. Though the program’s representation of black women is

sometimes labeled negative, the show has an audience that has kept it on the air for five seasons. The audience identifies with the cast.

As Smudde expressed in his definition of consubstantiality, if the audience's needs are met, the higher the probability audience members can be persuaded to act. If viewers like the programming, they will watch. If they continue watching, the probability increases that they will also purchase merchandise from the web store. The casting process is another tool used to create identification-based rhetoric.

The similarities between the Hernandez and the Peterson cases, exploration of stereotypes, Census Bureau statistics and language are used to provoke thought about a sensitive topic and prompt readers to question the media status quo. In this case, the feature story was used as a tool to create awareness about an issue that may have gone unnoticed by the general public. Once an issue is presented and explained to the public, the hope is that people care enough to address the problem. Once the problem is addressed, perhaps it can be corrected.

Conclusion

Careers in the field of public relations not only require the ability to write and adhere to the appropriate writing style, but the practitioner must be able to craft documents that effectively use rhetorical language to not only persuade the reader, but identify the reader with the author, subject or cause. The practitioner must be able to make this connection in order to evoke an emotion or need in the reader that will prompt the desired action.

Desired actions of the target audience include listening to a radio broadcast, watching a new television program, donating or volunteering with a nonprofit, purchasing a product or service, patronizing a restaurant, attending an upcoming event or any action that helps the

organization accomplish goals. The level of success of a campaign and resulting goal accomplishment could mean the difference between a company, corporation or organization staying in business or shutting down.

Kenneth Burke's "Theory of Identification and Consubstantiality" provides additional insight into the rhetorical choices I made in crafting public relations documents. The goal of each piece was to deliver information in a manner that made the reader identify with the subject and act upon that identification. Smudde (2004) states that Burke's ideas are useful in the field of public relations (p. 421). "Burke's view of rhetoric is sufficiently broad that it would illuminate public relations activity like special events, crisis and issue communication, corporate speakers, news releases and press conferences as symbolic acts while enacting campaigns" (Smudde, 2004, p. 421). Burke's identification theory can prove helpful in future public relations campaigns because it forces the practitioner to work beyond communication principles and theories by focusing on rhetoric as a science.

In addition to applying appropriate theories and principles, a public relations practitioner must also have the ability to research, gather and quantify the results of the research, put results in writing and present results to management and employees. These abilities enable a public relations practitioner to create an appropriate public relations plan and properly implement the plan. If these steps are taken and executed well, the campaign should be successful.

Appendix A of Sample Documents (Research)

Document A1

OWL Radio Listener Survey

1. When you do listen to the radio, do you prefer local/terrestrial, internet, or satellite?

- Local/Terrestrial
- Internet
- Satellite

2. Which genre(s) do you prefer? (Check all that apply.)

- Top 40/Pop
- Hip-Hop/Rap
- R&B/Soul/Funk
- Blues
- Alternative
- Country
- Rock/Metal
- Talk/News/Sports
- Classic Top40/Pop
- Politics
- Classic Rock/Metal
- Classic Hip-Hop/Rap/R&B
- Punk
- Caribbean (Reggae/Dancehall/Calypso/Ska/Reggaeton)
- Classic Country
- Adult Contemporary/Soft Rock
- Spanish Programming
- International/World Music
- Bluegrass
- New Wave
- Dance/House/Techno/Electronica

- Christian/Gospel

3. Have you heard of KSU OWL Radio?

- Yes
- No

4. If yes, how did you hear about OWL Radio?

- Friend/Classmate
- Professor
- Internet
- Ad in the KSU Sentinel
- Promotions (Tables, Events, Etc.)
- Clubs/Associations
- Internet (Station website, Facebook, Stickam, etc.)
- Other

5. Do you listen to KSU OWL Radio?

- Yes
- No

6. If yes, how often do you listen to KSU OWL Radio?

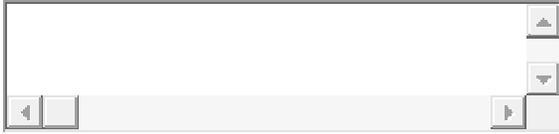
- Once a month
- Once a week
- 2 to 4 times a week
- More than 4 times a week
- Less than once a month

*

7. Have you attended a KSU OWL Radio or OWL Radio featured event?

- Yes
- No

8. If yes, what was the event(s)?

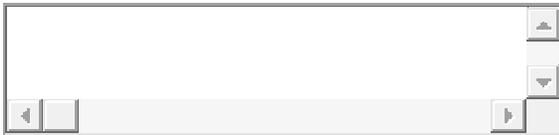
An empty text input field with a light gray border. It features a vertical scrollbar on the right side and a horizontal scrollbar at the bottom, both with standard arrow icons.

9. Did you enjoy the event?

Yes

No

10. What kind of events and programming would you like to see featured by KSU OWL Radio?

An empty text input field with a light gray border. It features a vertical scrollbar on the right side and a horizontal scrollbar at the bottom, both with standard arrow icons.

Document A2

SWOT Analysis for Jackson Communications

Strengths

My strengths include my education, which includes a Bachelor's degree in Communication and a Master's degree in Professional Writing. In addition, my ability in the areas of public relations/promotions, news/feature writing, technical writing, and advertising copywriting is also a strength. Another strength is combined work experience (corporate banking and customer service), as well as the fact that I'm an older, nontraditional student who brings a higher level of maturity to the table.

Weaknesses

My major weakness is my lack of experience running a small business. This lack of experience creates a lack of confidence in my ability to gain clients. I'm also concerned that the customers may not always be willing to take my advice in business matters. Conforming to customer demands may be difficult. As a practitioner, I must know how to balance my knowledge with the client's ideas.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity to focus on small businesses and nonprofits that can't afford to hire larger public relations firms. The client's desire to have one person handle an account could also present an opportunity. Bigger firms cannot guarantee that a client's account won't be passed around. The client can receive specialized, one-on-one attention and will only have one person handling their accounts.

Threats

The top threat is the economy. Small businesses are suffering because people are not as willing to part with their money. This fact could negatively affect sales. Another threat could be Georgia's unemployment rate. At 9.9%, it is higher than the national average of 9.5 percent. This will have a negative effect on clients' sales. The most consistent threat will be competition. Some competitors have more experience and a longer track record and this could present a problem for a new business.

Web Site and Corresponding Target Markets

The web site for Jackson Writing and Consulting Services would offer affordable writing and consulting services to small businesses. The goal is to give these businesses access to services they can't otherwise afford. The primary target would be the aforementioned small businesses. The secondary target market would be nonprofit organizations and local independent film companies, record labels and musicians. These businesses, organizations, labels and musicians often can't afford the type of public relations campaigns offered to artists signed to major labels.

1. Target Market Demographic—Small businesses and nonprofit organizations. The Small Business Administration defines a small business as one having fewer than 500 employees and less than \$7 million in annual receipts. Specialty will be retail and other service-based businesses, but manufacturing businesses will also be included in potential client pool. Small businesses include those that offer services and/or goods, local independent record labels and artists, local independent film companies, actors and comedians.

2. The main societal trend that will affect the client base is the current state of the economy. Joblessness and underemployment levels are increasing. Potential customers may be less willing to spend money on the client's goods and/or services because disposable income may have decreased.
3. The industry trend that could possibly affect the success of the business is the steady increase of professional writers offering services in the market. Competition will always be a potential problem for a new business, so the proprietor must figure out how to offer something unique. An advantage that may curb competition is that Kennesaw State University is the only college in Georgia offering a Master's degree focused on applied writing. Other schools in the University System of Georgia, like Georgia State University and the University of Georgia, offer post-graduate writing programs, but the concentration is either creative writing or composition/rhetoric.
4. The target customers' primary need is publicity. The public must first be informed that the client exists and must then be informed of what services and/or goods the client is offering to the public.
5. The corresponding benefits will be education and experience in public relations and advertising. Each individual client and market will be thoroughly researched so that client needs are met.

Marketing Strategy

1. Distribution Channels—Distribution channels will be direct mail, press releases, newsletters, e-mail, web site links, and other useful channels.
2. Promotional activities—Door-to-door sales, cold calls, web site, blog postings, distribution of press kits to various media outlets, implementation of newsletters for

- clients, direct mail campaigns. Social media will also be utilized including MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, etc.
3. Distribution Channels—JCC would utilize internet resources. These would include e-mail, social networking (MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, etc.), the JCC site itself and other resources. Direct mail, personal visits and phone calls would still be utilized.

Web Site's Position

The web site and business are new so market position will be below more established businesses. However, with the aforementioned marketing strategies and competitive prices, the business should steadily grow.

Competition

This plan will focus on the public relations competition in the Metropolitan Atlanta area. A Google search of the phrase “public relations firms in Atlanta” returned several million results. The top 3 firms on the list are Ogilvy Public Relations (www.ogilvypr.com), Duffey Communications (www.duffey.com) and Jackson-Spalding (www.jacksonspalding.com). A Google search of the phrase “professional writing services in Atlanta” also yielded millions of results. After weeding out some irrelevant results, I was able to find the Creative Writes web site. Creative Writes (<http://creativewrites.net/default.aspx>) is run by Marietta native Betsy Bearden. Her business is more likely than bigger agencies to be JCC's competition.

General Strategies

General strategies include contacting businesses and nonprofit organizations via phone, e-mail, social networks and in-person visits. Interested managers and proprietors will be

scheduled for a detailed presentation consisting of handouts and a PowerPoint slide show.

The purpose of the presentation would be to inform prospective clients of JCC's services. If prospective clients decide they might be interested, they will receive a price list and package deal offers will be discussed.

Pricing Strategies

It was difficult to find any actual prices on the aforementioned web sites, so the next strategy would entail doing some general research on the cost of each service offered by the JCC. Businesses are sometimes reluctant to post prices so as not to undervalue their services. For the purposes of this plan, the focus will be on press kits, since they are easier to research. According to Kennesaw State public relations professor Dr. Amber Hutchins, professional press kit prices vary, but could run as high as \$700. JCC's strategy would be to save the client money by creating an electronic press kit. This could save the client between \$100 and \$200. This strategy could also save JCC money on expenses.

Document A3**SWOT Analysis For Men Stopping Violence**

The objective of the public relations campaign of Men Stopping Violence (MSV) is to increase awareness of the organization which will enable fundraising efforts to succeed. The public will be informed of the services offered and will be able to purchase services, volunteer or make donations.

MSV has several strengths in its favor. The organization has been around for 26 years. This length of time makes MSV an established organization as opposed to an upstart. The second strength is the number of connections the organization has made within the clergy, corporations, health industry, and legal and criminal justice circles.

The final strength of the organization is a unique angle in stopping violence against women. MSV's goal is to change the way batterers think about women. This behavior is learned and the organization offers classes in which offenders can learn a different way to deal with anger and frustration. The classes also teach that control is not the same as love.

One of MSV's weaknesses is that though it has been around for a long time, the organization lacks mainstream name recognition. This is problematic because if people have not heard of MSV, they cannot purchase services, volunteer or donate. Lack of funds is another weakness. Without the finances to have events, produce literature and pay staff, the organization's success will be limited. Nonprofits are vulnerable in this difficult economic time

because when people cut spending, donations to charities and nonprofits are usually first on the list.

Opportunities for MSV could come in the form of cooperative ventures with other organizations that work to abolish domestic violence. Fundraising dinners, press conferences, raffles, bake sales and yard sales could be helpful. Since some men only abuse when they use alcohol or drugs, MSV could also work with intervention programs like Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous to provide joint solutions. These organizations are well-known and working with them could propel MSV to a new level of recognition. Perspective donors and volunteers would be impressed with MSV's ability to work well with other organizations as opposed to only promoting its own agenda.

The biggest threat to the organization is the lack of staff. MSV needs funds to hire more salaried employees as well as the recognition to hire unpaid interns and volunteers. The interns would be students who are planning to be employed in social work, psychology or any area of criminal justice while the volunteers would be anyone who wants to contribute to a worthy cause. Volunteers are necessary for the success of any nonprofit organization since they usually lack the funds to pay a full staff.

If this campaign is successful, MSV will gain the name recognition it needs which will enable the organization to acquire the additional funding. This funding will lead to an increase in staff and supplies which will help MSV offer more services. Once fully staffed, the organization will be able to advertise on the radio, television and on the internet. Fundraising opportunities, internships and volunteer hours will also increase as a result of this successful public relations campaign.

Document A4

Media Analysis

Background

The National Basketball Association (NBA) is currently experiencing a player *lockout*. A lockout is the exclusion of employees by their employer from their place of work until certain terms are agreed upon.

According to an official press release on NBA.com, the dispute is between the players and the organization and is a result of a failure to reach a collective bargaining agreement. As a result, the players are unable to participate in any NBA-related activities, and the fans face an uncertain season. Players are keeping themselves occupied by playing with teams overseas or playing for smaller local organizations.

Problem Statement

The problem from a public relations perspective is that fan and employee morale usually weaken during times of strike and lockout. Fans sometimes view players and the organization in a negative light when they can't resolve these issues in a timely manner so that they can provide the entertainment fans expect. Employees, especially those in operations and broadcasting areas, are concerned about whether or not they'll continue to have their jobs if the season isn't starting on time. The longer the lockout continues, the more likely it is that the upcoming season will not start on time, so it is imperative to improve fan and employee morale in these uncertain times.

Publics

Fans, surrounding communities and employees are the three main publics that the NBA must be concerned about. These stakeholders may become uncertain or disgruntled about the dispute and the outcome of the lockout.

Objectives

The objective of this public relations campaign would be to strengthen employee and fan morale while continuing to serve surrounding communities. On the fan side, the public relations department could work with the merchandise sales department to determine if sales have stayed the same, increased or decreased. If sales have decreased, a goal of 10 % per month increase will be in place.

The programming department should check with cable distributors to see if purchases of monthly subscriptions to special NBA packages have stayed the same, increased or decreased. If subscriptions have decreased, the sales goal should also be 10% increase per month. On the employee side, each department's turnover should be monitored monthly. If employees are leaving the organization at an abnormally high rate, the starting objective would be decreasing the turnover rate by approximately 10% per month.

Research

On the fan side, the first and most important research tools utilized should be monitoring NBA social media outlets. This will include the NBA.com message boards, any public network message boards like those of ESPN or Fox Sports, YouTube channels sponsored by those networks, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc. These outlets are a direct line to the fan base. The number of new fans joining and current fans leaving the organization's fan pages may indicate whether fans are willing to hang on until the lockout is over. Fans also use these outlets to vent

any dissatisfaction and anger during strike and lockout times. In addition, if answers to particular questions are needed, surveys may be posted on social media pages.

If answers to particular questions are needed, surveys may be posted on social media pages. Merchandise sales reports should be ordered from the sales department to see if the monthly sales have decreased.

Strategies and Tactics

From the employee perspective, each negatively impacted team organization should hold a meeting to reassure employees that those in the front office are doing everything in their power to come to an agreement and end the lockout so the season can start on time. If possible, each department head should host an appreciation dinner for his or her employees to show how important they are to the organization.

The next step would be for each team organization to add an extra charity event to their itinerary each month. This will demonstrate that although the organization is experiencing a lockout, the NBA still cares about the communities it serves. Since the players are unable to assist with events as they normally would, other employees can fill in for hosting duties. This would include dance team members, commentators, and any other employees who want to help with this effort.

Offering employees incentives and cross-training opportunities could demonstrate that the organization is invested in its employees and has no intention of laying them off even if the season starts late. Encouraging them to assist with fan morale events like charity work would reassure them that their effort and participation is still needed during these uncertain times.

From the fan perspective, if the new subscription numbers from the cable distributor are showing that subscriptions have decreased, the package fee should be prorated based on the shorter length of the season. For instance, if a subscriber pays \$60 a month for the NBA TV/League Pass package, but the season is shortened to three months instead of the usual five months, the \$60 fee should be waived for the two months the league was inactive. The same strategy should be implemented once merchandise sales numbers and survey results are in.

Document A5



P.R. Plan

Situation--Men Stopping Violence lacks name recognition. This presents a problem because people must know about the organization in order to volunteer, donate or purchase services.

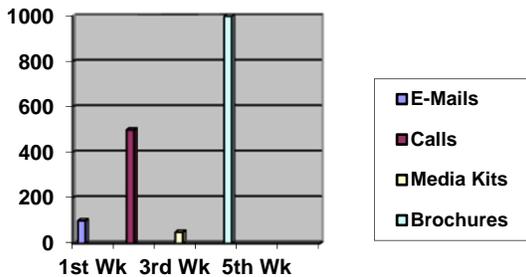
Objectives--Increase awareness, which will increase volunteers, donations and purchases of services offered by MSV. MSV would also like to form partnerships with other well-known organizations which will lead to more awareness.

Audiences--Audiences would be police officers, probation officers, parole officers, attorneys, judges, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, therapists, clergy, the general public and others who may hold a stake in these men getting help.

Strategies--Utilize media outlets to inform the public of the existence of MSV. This exposure will motivate people to participate in fundraisers and assist the organization in other ways. Partner with people within legal system to create awareness.

Tactics--First tactic would be to conduct research. Research will include gathering names and contact information of aforementioned people and organizations. Mass e-mails will inform potential partners of the existence of MSV and the services offered. Media kits will next be sent to local radio and television stations. Brochures will be mailed to individuals. If some of these outlets do stories or PSAs about MSV, awareness will increase automatically.

Calendar--Campaign will start on the November 1, 2008 and last approximately two months. Research and preparation will last one week. During this time e-mail lists, regular mailing lists and phone numbers will be gathered. Mass e-mails will go out in the first week of November. Phone calls will be made in the second week of November. Media kits will go out to all local media outlets in the third week of November and brochures will be mailed to individuals the fourth week of November. Results will be gathered at the end of December. The following is a chart of the different types and amounts of communications and when they will be sent out:



Budget-This campaign will cost approximately \$840. Costs are calculated as follows:

Supply costs

Six packs of printer paper @ \$5 per unit	\$30
Fifty pocketed folders @ \$2 per unit	\$100
Eight Ink Cartridges (Three color and five black) @ \$30 per unit	\$240
Three boxes of 500-count business envelopes @ \$20 per unit	\$60
Regular postage for mailing 1000 brochures @ \$0.40 per unit	\$400

Total cost of supplies **\$840**

P.R. director @ \$35 per hour (nonprofit rate)	\$4200
P.R. assistant @ \$25 per hour (nonprofit rate)	\$3000
Total cost of staff	\$7200

TOTAL COST OF CAMPAIGN

\$8040

Evaluation--At the end of the campaign, impression results will be gathered. The number of phone inquiries and media placements will be recorded. Increases or decreases in service purchases will be noted. Once all results are in, information will be evaluated to see if the campaign worked as intended.

Appendix B of Sample Documents (News Releases)

Document B1



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Chonticia Jackson
chonticia@yahoo.com

Kennesaw State University's Online Radio Station Seeks Volunteer Staffers

Students Will Gain Invaluable Experience in Production, Sports, News and Promotions

Kennesaw, GA, September 10, 2011--As KSU Owl Radio, Kennesaw State's online radio station, celebrates its fourth anniversary, student DJs and other personnel are needed. The addition of KSU Owl Radio to the university's media outlets has brought excitement to the campus as well as opportunities to communication majors who hope to gain experience in broadcasting, production and promotions.

The addition of the station has enabled Kennesaw State to compete with other universities that offer similar facilities to students and could possibly lead to higher enrollment. Though on-air positions tend to go quickly, the sports, news, production and promotions departments are always accepting applications. As stated on the website, the station needs people with "ideas, energy and involvement."

Though originally geared toward communication majors, the jobs at KSU Owl Radio can be beneficial to students from other disciplines as well. The experience these positions provide is important for those students who plan to graduate and enter the competitive fields of media or

public relations in a stagnant job market and slow economy. Experience could be the deciding factor in whether or not a graduate is hired.

WKSU currently offers talk radio, sports programming and a variety of music shows playing genres from 90s alternative to street punk and ska. This eclectic blend of programming ensures that Owl Radio has something for every listener.

Interested students should go to the station's website at www.ksuradio.com, follow the links and fill out applications for their respective departments.

Document B2



NEWS RELEASE

Chonticia Jackson

chonticia@yahoo.com

Grassroots Nonprofit Organization Helping to Preserve Georgia's Beaches

Tybee Island, GA, September 21, 2011-The Surfrider Foundation, which has 60 chapters and 50,000 members nationwide, is bringing problems facing Georgia's beaches to the forefront. Pollution, erosion on the state's developed barrier islands, water quality, increased coastal populations and the safety of marine life are just a few of the issues threatening this delicate ecosystem. The organization compiles "State of the Beach" reports to inform residents of the conditions of their beaches.

With renewed interest in the environment at the forefront of recent elections, Surfrider recognizes the importance of addressing these issues. The organization's principles include maintaining the integrity of the planet's coasts, preserving the right of low-impact, free and open access to the world's waves and beaches, and environmental education for concerned citizens.

Surfrider intends to continue current initiatives and suggest new legislation to protect beaches across the country including Georgia's Jekyll, St. Simons and Tybee Islands. Aside from the environmental implications, failing to address these issues could have a negative effect on tourism in these areas which could lead to losses of revenue.

Surfrider's website provides information about measures taken to protect Georgia's Beaches.

One such measure is The Georgia Department of Natural Resources proposal that gives The Coastal Marshlands Protection Committee the authority to enforce water management. The site also explains to citizens how they can help by donating or volunteering and provides links to related websites, documents and research studies. Concerned citizens, environmental activists and legislators would find these resources useful in the plan to save Georgia's beaches.

Industries that provide jobs to the area and the country's military bases also hold a stake in healthy coasts.

Surfrider's current goals are spreading the word to as many people as possible and giving those people the opportunity to get involved. Interested citizens can find out more about Surfrider by going to the website at Surfrider.org.

Appendix C of Sample Documents (Direct Mail Letters)

Document C1

Dear Listener,

It's that time of year again! WRFG, your non-commercial, educational, community radio station needs your help with donations and volunteers.

Brief History

WRFG, which has been filling a void on the air for 34 years, was the first Atlanta radio station since the 50s to feature Southern music like blues, bluegrass and jazz. It has also reflected Atlanta's growth as an international city by featuring music geared toward the city's Latin, African, Asian and Caribbean populations. WRFG has broadcasted live from the Atlanta Arts Festival, the Georgia Grassroots Festival and the Hungry Club, which was the city's popular weekly multiracial discussion forum.

WRFG has offered air time to local poets, playwrights and authors regularly and utilizes programming directed toward individual neighborhoods, people with alternative lifestyles and other underrepresented segments of the community. In-depth coverage, like that of the rebellion at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary in 1987, and international broadcasts, like those done from Jamaica, Ireland and Barbados, have kept WRFG on the cutting edge. Radio Free Georgia, as WRFG is often called, has also made a mark in the documentary world with the 50-part "Living Atlanta," which has won numerous awards.

Benefits of Becoming a Member

When you choose to become a member of WRFG by donating money or volunteering your time, you choose to help us continue to deliver progressive information and global entertainment to diverse listening audiences. As stated on our website, www.wrfg.org, “our mission is to uplift human dignity and give people more control over their lives by drawing together members who strive to (1) provide a broadcast medium for those communities who have been denied access to electronic media by big media corporations and (2) to popularize and preserve indigenous forms of cultural expression not typically broadcast by commercial media entities.”

How You Can Help

We receive the majority of our operating revenue from sponsors, special events and support from listeners. With your help, we can purchase modern studio equipment and move to a new tower which would allow us to have a better signal and reach more listeners. We need this funding so that we can continue bringing you the public affairs programming and music you desire. For more information on how to volunteer, how to donate and to see a program schedule, please go to our website, www.wrfg.org. For donations and volunteer opportunities, please call the office at 404-523-3471.

Thank you,

Chonticia Jackson

Volunteer Coordinator

Document C2



Dear Friend,

Approximately 30,000 animals will be killed in shelters in the state of Georgia this year. This news is grim, but there's something you, your family and friends can do about it.

Who We Are

The Georgia Animal Project (GAP) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing low-cost spay/neuter services to individuals, reputable rescue organizations and animal shelters. GAP uses highly skilled local veterinarians, vet techs and volunteers to tackle the problem head on.

Mission Statement

As stated on the web site, GAP's mission is to "reduce animal suffering, protect animals from euthanasia and confront animal overpopulation by directly subsidizing spay/neuter costs through low-cost spay/neuter clinics and effective education programs for the public."

What We Do

GAP attempts to reduce pet overpopulation by sponsoring several clinics each month, and the costs are much lower than a veterinarian would charge. Cost is based on the client's salary, which makes services affordable for everyone.

In addition, GAP provides education about spay/neuter services to the public. Increasing awareness and dispelling myths about spaying and neutering are important steps in the goal of reducing pet overpopulation.

In addition to controlling the pet population and minimizing the need for euthanasia, spaying and neutering also benefits your pet's health by greatly reducing chances of cancer as well as reducing the chances your pet will be harmed while wandering, as animals are known to do when they're in heat.

If you or someone you know is in need of low-cost spay/neuter services or for more information about how you can help, please visit the web site at www.animalproject.org or call at (770) 704-PAWS (7297).

You could actually save a life.

Appendix D of Sample Documents (Feature Story)

Document D1

Have You Seen Me?

A pregnant woman disappears close to her due date. The man she loves is a suspect. Her body eventually washes up on San Francisco Bay.

This is a familiar story, but it is not the story of Laci Peterson. It is the story of Evelyn Hernandez, a 24-year-old nurse originally from El Salvador, who along with her 5-year-old son, Alex, disappeared during the time Laci Peterson was missing. Few people outside of Hernandez's community noticed. The same could not be said for Peterson's case. Constant television news coverage, television specials, and front-page newspaper reports drilled Peterson's story into the public psyche. Why did Peterson's case warrant national media attention while Hernandez's did not? Do race and class determine which missing women are covered on a national scale?

Many minority women go missing each year in this country, but rarely do they receive the type of media blitz utilized in the cases of their white counterparts. Hernandez's name, along with those of Tamika Huston, a 24-year-old African-American woman from Spartanburg, South Carolina, and LaToiya Figueroa of Philadelphia, another pregnant woman of African-American and Hispanic descent, are not as familiar as those of Laci Peterson, Lori Hacking, or Natalee Holloway.

The United States Census Bureau states that minorities represent 32 percent of this country's population. According to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, minorities represent 12 percent of newspaper journalists. The Radio-Television News Directors

Association estimates that 22 percent of the television news workforce is made up of minorities. These numbers are not reflected in this news coverage.

Jessica McBride, journalist for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel has an opinion on the subject.

“There is a glaring racial bias at play,” says McBride. “The media need to take a collective step back because their hyper focus on this subset of crime is not meaningless.”

McBride cites the case of “Runaway Bride” Jennifer Wilbanks, as an example.

“A Milwaukee television news station ran her story as its top news story,” scoffs McBride. “That story had no impact outside of her hometown.”

Christa Robinson, spokeswoman for CNN, is not so quick to state that bias is the reason for the disparity.

“A wide range of editorial considerations, including competition from other news events, impact the attention given to each potential story,” says Robinson. “The race or ethnicity of a possible victim is not a factor.”

Stereotypes could also be blamed for these differences. Movies, music videos, and reality television shows are just a few outlets where certain images of minority women are prevalent. While white women are often presented as angelic and pure, African-American women are often perceived as promiscuous, sassy sisters. Hispanic women are sometimes portrayed as oversexed “firecrackers” and Asian women are seen as submissive, docile objects of desire. In society, women are defined as much by race as by gender.

Economic status could also be cited as one reason a victim does not receive national news coverage. Even missing white women who are not of means are rarely covered in national news reports. According to Kelly St. John of the San Francisco Gate, Laci Peterson's family had the financial resources and connections to ensure that the entire country was aware of her case.

“She had a vocal family advocating on her behalf,” says St. John. “Her family also had the financial and public relations help of a well connected crime victims group in Modesto, the Sund/Carrington Memorial Reward Foundation, formed during the search for the Yosemite murder victims in 1999.”

Evelyn Hernandez's family and friends had no such resources.

Natalee Holloway's case could be considered newsworthy due to its unusual nature. CNN correspondent, Karl Penhaul, states that Holloway, an 18-year-old high school senior, was on a class trip to Aruba with classmates when she went missing in May of 2005. The fact that the disappearance occurred in Aruba could have future implications in the relationship between the United States and Aruba. Another detail the public found interesting was that one of the original suspects, Joren Van Der Sloot, was the son of a judge and some were worried he would receive special treatment. For those reasons, Holloway's case is not automatically a case of bias.

Evelyn Hernandez and Laci Peterson's cases eerily mirror each other. Peterson's husband, Scott, has been convicted and sentenced to death for the murders of her and her unborn son, Conner. No one has been charged in Hernandez's case, though her boyfriend and father of her unborn child is the main suspect. Her son, Alex has never been found. Perhaps this is no coincidence. Ultimately, the power to change this trend is in the hands of the public. Society

should demand diversity in these stories and force the media to treat all missing women as equals.

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