

News & Views

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Honoring a Great PR Educator

By *Mark McClennan, APR*

I had the pleasure of attending a recent event at [Boston University](#) where the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) students unveiled a new scholarship: the PRSSA/Stephen Quigley Scholarship. It will underwrite PRSSA National dues for a PRSSA student member who displays the same passion and drive for the industry that Professor Quigley has shown and practices every day.



According to Alexandra Karadimas, president of the Edward L. Bernays Chapter of PRSSA at BU, "During his 30-year career, Professor [Stephen Quigley](#) has touched the minds of each and every student entering the public relations program here. Through his engaging classes and compassionate advising, Professor Quigley continues to focus attention to the changing issues of our profession. Professor Quigley has provided encouragement, guidance and inspiration to students aspiring to pursue a career in public relations."

While at times I felt like I was attending a memorial (Steve still has a long career ahead of him), it was a very moving event. Michael Chersonson and Bill Murray of PRSA National also took the time out of their busy schedules to write a letter to

From the Editor

This month, we recap recent Chapter programs about crisis PR in the age of social media and on multicultural marketing; preview issues to be debated at PRSA's National Assembly; and speak to a member of the local lifestyle media. We also honor a colleague and educator, and remember a fellow practitioner and PRSA Boston leader.

As always, happy reading!

Chris Ranjitkar
News & Views
Editor

Don't Miss!

Steve recognizing his work.

It is only through the dedication of professors like Steve Quigley, and the active, involved members of the PRSSA, that the PR profession will continue to grow, thrive and set new standards for excellence and innovation.

Steve serves as an example for us all.

[Mark W. McClennan](#), APR, is a former President of PRSA Boston and a VP at Schwartz Communications. A version of this piece also appears on the PRSA Northeast District Blog.

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Crisis Management in Twitch-Time

By Barbara Wellnitz, APR

Kami Watson Huyse, APR, and Gerald R. Baron say that a company or organization's brand is no longer defined by them, but, instead, is defined by their customers -- pleased or disgruntled -- and other audiences in today's viral world. Huyse and Baron say it's a myth that you can control what goes on in the minute-by-minute news cycle where everything happens in "twitch time."



These were the opinions they shared during the Chapter-sponsored webinar [on integrating social media into crisis planning](#). There are, of course, good "tweets," as when news of a disabled jet successfully landing on the Hudson River is conveyed, and bad ones, in which journalists include erroneous Twitter feeds from "citizen journalists" in their news coverage. At that point, it's already too late to control what's being said about your company or organization. You can't take something off the Internet.

Here are tips they offered for crisis planning in the age of Twitter:

- 1) Monitor the "conversation"** diligently on social media outlets through free and paid search tools.
- 2) Maintain a social "footprint."** Your company Web site is still the most important focal point for crisis information; have a crisis page ready to activate. Follow the people who matter to you the most. Set up Facebook and LinkedIn accounts as part of your crisis plan. Get a Twitter handle, now. It's too easy for someone else to own your name.
- 3) Establish a quick response team.** Have pre-established templates so a cross-discipline team (legal, public relations, marketing, business continuity, etc.) can respond within an hour.
- 4) Lay out a crisis escalation process.** Make a flow chart to discover, evaluate and respond to negative information.
- 5) Plan for incremental release of information.** Provide information in a constant flow of short bursts as it becomes available; there isn't time for a lengthy news release in this crisis environment.
- 6) Make sure you have scalable technology.** Cell phones with texting, extra server capacity, geographical redundancy with on-site and off-site resources, for example.
- 7) Know your audience.** Who matters most to your future? Who's been affected by your crisis? Get information to them immediately and directly. Others are viral

Network with top PR pros in Entertainment and Sports

May 22, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm.

CBS Scene
200 Patriot Place
at Gillette Stadium
Foxboro, MA 02035

For questions about the program, call (212) 460-1461 or email [Denise Mojica](#).

[Register](#)

Quick Links

Stay connected with chapter members



Visit PRSA National's blog



Save the Date

Seven Ways to Generate Story Angles

Never struggle for a "hook" again

June 18, 2009

Send email to [Programs](#) for information on the webinar location and sign-up links

noise of "vocal bystanders" and "devoted detractors."

8) Speak the same language using the form of media that your audience uses. Respond in the same channel where the critics and comments originate. You may choose to include others later.

9) Know that some things never change. Crisis planning 101 is still the norm, but social media has added a greater degree of vulnerability in the age of "twitch speed." If it's bad news, make sure it comes from you.

10) Understand that it's still about trust. Tell it straight and truthfully. Understand that the right action is measured by your audience -- not by you. Ask: "How will this action be interpreted?"

Kami Watson Huyse, APR, is principal of My PR Pro and blogs about PR and crisis planning at [Communication Overtones](#). Gerald Baron is founder and CEO of PIER Systems, a provider of crisis communication management technology, and author of [Now is Too Late](#).

[Barbara Wellnitz](#), APR, Fellow PRSA, is a former President of Boston's PRSA Chapter and a Senior Counsel at Ryan Wellnitz & Associates.

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President's Letter

PR in May -- Spring Forward

Dear Colleagues:

It's not too difficult identifying the current season in Boston. Thermometers indicate it's somewhere between 93°F one day and 53°F the next; the Hallmark Card corporation urges you to begin shopping for Receptionists' Day gifts; and the Washington press corps says it's time to grade President Obama's effectiveness based on his first 100 days in office. By any definition, it's spring.

I recall a time when spring delivered one of the business world's occasional slow periods, accessible even to PR practitioners. These welcome respites would arrive unexpectedly, but neatly spaced out -- almost always between Christmas and New Year, often during the dog days of August. And, sometimes, after a burst of late-winter trade shows and new product introductions, they occurred in the heart of spring.



Back in the day, a mentor earnestly explained to me that these short spells were not vacations. Each break was actually the calm eye of a hurricane passing overhead. Cyclonic winds and driving rain would disappear just long enough that, if you were smart and motivated, you could tackle some of the PR jobs that always seemed unfinished: qualify a few new press contacts, update a messaging document, weed out old files.

Letting one of these mundane tasks slip for a while was OK. But taken together, keeping them up to date spelled the difference between chaos and a PR operation that was in top trim. In other words, before 24/7 news cycles and the über-competitive view that every day was a work day, a slow period meant the cobbler (on occasion) could outfit his own children with shoes.

The last time I experienced a lull at this point on the calendar was many, many springtimes ago. So this month, I'm going to schedule "a day off" to focus on some PR housekeeping. You might consider it, too. Few things are as productive, or keep you moving forward, as PR's Spring Break.

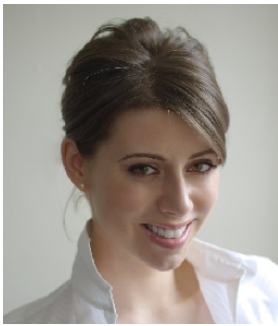


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Q&A with Lifestyle Writer Karyn Polewaczyk

This month, we turn away from business editorial and shift our focus to new trends in lifestyle media with rising local lifestyle star, blogger and writer, Karyn Polewaczyk.



Can you tell us for whom you write?

I presently write for a handful of women's lifestyle blogs, mostly notably for [More Magazine](#), and handle creative tasks for a New York City-based hotelier, a Web 2.0 start-up and a luxury boutique in Boston.

Do you feel your role as a blogger differs from the role of a traditional journalist?

I wouldn't define myself as strictly a blogger - the blogs I do write for are a small sector of the bigger picture for these groups - but they say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Anyone - your average Joe, an executive, a New York Times bestselling author - can become a blogger; I think a true journalist has a niche, or a speciality, and tends to follow a more conventional educational path. That's how I view it, at least.

In your career, what have good PR people done to make them 'good' in your eyes? What peeves do you have about PR people?

A good PR person knows that their client's product or service isn't going to work for the entire population and won't try to sugarcoat things to the point of being smarmy. I've definitely dealt with that before, and it's very obvious and disheartening.

What is your area of coverage and what is the best way for PR practitioners to approach you or pitch you with an idea?

I write mostly fashion, style and beauty pieces. Most of the products and designers I review are based in New York City; likewise, most of the PR agencies with which I maintain relationships are also based in New York City. Having a relationship with a vendor or client of mine is beneficial to pitching to me, as is familiarity with my columns and writing.

How do you envision lifestyle media changing over the next few years?

Newspapers are going to have to figure out a way to charge customers for online readership -- there's simply no way for them to survive without that. I've been spoiled by having *The New York Times* readily available at the click of a mouse anytime of the day, where my parents have faithfully subscribed to and paid for the print edition of *The Boston Herald* for years. I don't know how I feel about the Kindle just yet. Traditional media outlets will have no choice to continue to welcome blogs; there's just too many out there to be ignored. They'll also have to step their game up if they want to a continued piece of the pie.

Karyn Polewaczyk is a beauty, fashion and lifestyle blogger, columnist and freelance writer based in Cambridge, Mass. She can be found at [Karyn With a Whine](#). CRR

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Poll: Where Do You Stand on Proposed Changes to PRSA's Bylaws?

At its annual meeting this year, PRSA's National Assembly will vote on major changes to the organization's bylaws. Proposed revisions to the bylaws, which determine how PRSA is governed and run, are the first major changes being considered in more than 60 years.

PRSA National recently highlighted a number of these proposals in [Tactics Online](#) and posted more detailed information on [MemberNet](#). Expect to receive specific bylaw wording over the summer, but until then here are a few of the proposed modifications:

Broaden Membership -- Membership in PRSA would be extended to include other communications professionals, including those involved with social media, strategic planning, marketing, business development and advertising. All members would be required to abide by PRSA's Code of Ethics.

Change the way National Officers are Elected -- Currently, National Officers and Board members are elected by the Delegates (who are elected by the chapters). The bylaws would change to have direct national elections with all members voting.

Change the National Board -- Currently the National Board has members from the 10 PRSA districts (i.e. Northeast, Western) and two "at-large" members. The proposed change would eliminate regional representation and elect all "at-large" members.

Decouple APR from National Leadership -- Candidates for National office will not be required to be APRs. Under the new requirements, any PRSA member in good standing who is Accredited in Public Relations (APR), or is a Chapter, District, Section or Committee leader, or has more than 20 years of PR experience would be eligible to run for the Board.

We are interested in learning what Chapter members think about these issues. Share your opinion by sending email to Chapter President [Jack Jackson](#) or Northeast District Chair [Mark W. McClennan, APR](#).

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Cultural Factors Becoming Must-Have Elements in Marketing and PR Initiatives

Growth in the size and the sheer buying power of Hispanic, African-American and Asian-American communities means PR planners can no longer hope a "one-size-fits-all" outreach effort will deliver a majority of their target markets.

Combined with the fact that English is a second language for more than a third of "minority" segments means marketing professionals have to catch up to the nation's cultural realities, according to a panel of experts assembled by PRSA Boston. Their observations on the implications to PR of an increasingly diverse American public were the focus of a well-attended chapter program in May at Curry College.

Cristy Clavijo-Kish, a senior VP of multicultural markets for PR Newswire, underscored the diversity imperative: brands need to connect with customers in culturally relevant ways. [Her statistics](#) showed the economic justification for this is strong. Companies and organizations operating in New England, for example, stand to gain due to the region's flourishing multicultural consumers.

Massachusetts ranks in the top 10 states for buying power for Asian-Americans. Clavijo-Kish stressed the importance of targeting local, non-English publications and using native-speakers in all outreach activities.

Eduardo Crespo, CEO of the Hispanic Market Solutions consulting firm, [cited movement](#) of Hispanic icons in sports and entertainment into the U.S. mainstream. Their influence across all audiences is significant. But he cautioned against thinking of it as a matter of simply translating promotional materials. "Translating English copy or ads does not work," he said. "Culturally authentic creative and copywriting is the way to go."

The ethnic makeup of patients and workers at Children's Hospital in Boston necessitates a significant level of [diversity in communications](#), according to Michelle Davis, the institution's executive VP of marketing. Particularly in a service business like healthcare, families relying on the hospital for medical treatment appreciate the extra effort. Davis employs a multicultural communications specialist to serve as the eyes and ears of Hispanic consumers, and makes more than the usual number of newsletters and magazines available in Spanish.

All three speakers emphasized the importance of obtaining buy-in from top executives before an organization considers a multicultural program. A commitment to the effort, and knowledge of the audiences being targeted, are keys to achieving success.

(Photograph courtesy of Curry College; Brian Winchester, photographer)

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Remembering Frank Todd LeBart

PRSA Boston recognizes long-time local PR leader



PRSA Boston mourns the loss of fellow practitioner, dear friend and former chapter director Frank Todd LeBart, 84, who passed away on February 21 in Orleans, Mass.



Mr. LeBart was born in San Bernardino, Calif., on August 9, 1924. He enlisted in the Navy in World War II, serving in the submarine service.

He was a 1947 graduate of Harvard University and received a master's of science degree in public relations from Boston University -- the first such degree awarded anywhere in the world -- in 1949.

During the Korean War, Mr. LeBart served as damage control officer and communications officer on an attack transport, the *USS Cavalier*. After the war, Mr. LeBart held various positions as a PR executive at one of the corporations later came to be branded as Exxon. In 1972, he was employed as a vice president of advertising and public relations for John Hancock Insurance Company.

As a life-long PR professional, Mr. LeBart was a director of the Boston chapter of PRSA; received the Silver Anvil Award (1978); was named the Outstanding Practitioner in New England (1980); received the BU Distinguished Alumni Award (1988); and was elected to the PRSA College of Fellows (1990).

He was also active in civic life, holding several local government positions in Sudbury and Duxbury. He was a board member and vice president of development of Plymouth Philharmonic Orchestra; a Bunker Hill Community College trustee; president of the Economic Council of Massachusetts; and chairman of the music and stewardship committees and trustee of Pilgrim Church of Duxbury.

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To contribute articles, news or information on upcoming events, please contact the *News & Views* editor, [Chris Ranjitkar](#).

