The History of Public Relations

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Era of History

- PR activities emerged at the same time with the growth human life.
- The basic principles of PR - building trust & tell the truth - are the basic principles in interacting with other to fulfill the needs.
- Ivy Lee is the real father of modern PR (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Lattimore, dkk, 2007; Seitel, 2001).
- From Grunig & Hunt (1984); Lattimore, dkk (2007) & Seitel (2001), the growth of PR can be categorized into 7 eras.
1800 B.C: farm bulletin in Iraq about techniques of harvesting, sowing & irrigating.

Rhetoricians (speechmakers): speech-writing, speaking on clients’ behalf, training for difficult questions.

Julius Cesar were master of persuasive techniques. He united public support through publications & staged event when faced with an upcoming battle.

Industrial revolution make the need of PR increased: social structure change, the rise of conflict of interest

1600: a college of propaganda was built by catholic church to inform public about catholicism. At that time, the term propaganda was not negative connotation

Source: Lattimore, dkk, 2007 & Seitel, 2001
The Early American

- American settlement era the colonies used publicity techniques to attract settlers.
  - Harvard College initiated the first systematic fund raising campaign (1641) first fund raising brochure
  - King’s College (Columbia Univ) issued the first press release to announce graduation (1758)
  - In American Revolutionary War, Samuel Adam used:
    - symbols ‘Liberty Tree’ to create identity & arouse emotions
    - Slogan ‘taxation without representation is tyranny’
    - Receptive public first using all available media
    - Setting Boston Tea Party to influence public opinion
    - Creating organizational structure to implement his campaign ‘Son of Liberty’ & ‘Committees of Correspondence’

Source: Lattimore, dkk, 2007 & Seitel, 2001
Cesar’s model was “stolen” by US public information committee during.

PR strategies had been applied primarily in the political sphere.

“History’s finest PR” → The federalist Papers was published & disseminated for the ratification of US Constitution.

Amos Kendall was the first presidential press secretary & congressional liaison when President Andrew Jackson appointed him.

Newspapers, for the first time, was used to inform a rising middle class as a result of urbanization, advance education & literacy rates.

Publicity drove the settlement of the American western frontier.

Phineas T. Barnum:

- Master of press-agentry → a consummate show-man (middle & late 1800s)
- Originated many methods for attracting public attention
- He contributed to our understanding of the power of publicity
- But, to do that, he was lack of honestly & did not let the truth interfere
- He was called “harmless deceiver” (London Times)
- Press-agentry is used to circuses, entertainment & professional sports, negative potential is limited; its use in business & politics is more threatening

Source: Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Lattimore, dkk, 2007
Journalistic & Public Information Era

- As a result of industrial era in 19th century in US.
- Business needs PR to solve business matters, conflicts, counter hostility, court public support the need of mass media.
- PR does "in house journalist".
- George Michaelis established the Publicity Bureau in Boston (1900) gathered factual information about his clients & distributed to newspapers (fact finding & personal contact).
- Theodore Roosevelt was the first president who make extensive use of press conferences & interviews rule the country from newspapers’ front pages.
Ivy Lee
- The father of modern PR
- Public should be informed
- Declaration of principle: tell the truth
- Good words must be supported by positive actions
- PR as a management function
Persuasive (Two Way Assimetric) Era (World War I)

- Using psychological principles of mass persuasion/scientific persuasion
- Woodrow Wilson set up Public Information Commitee, led by George Creel & Lasswell
- Edward Bernays:
  - Leading proponent of persuasion in PR
  - Emphasized the social science to PR
  - The firs book on PR (cristalizing public opinion)
  - Taught the firs college PR course at NY Univ (1923)
  - Counselor & speaking until his death in 1995 (103 years old)
Relationship Building (two-way symmetric) Era

- Dialogic communication
- Arthur Page
  - Vice president of AT&T
  - Business in a democratic country depends on public permission and approval
- Doris Fleischman Bernays
  - Struggling for equality in PR
- Rex Harlow
  - A leading PR educator
  - First professor
  - Founder of American Council of PR, to be PRSA (1952)
  - Founder PR Journal
The Theorists

- James E. Grunig
- Larissa Grunig
- David Dozier
- Timothy W. Coombs
- Glen Cameron
- William Benoit
- Elizabeth L. Toth
- Jaques L’Etang
- Robert Heath
MODEL of PR from Grunig & Hunt

- “representation of the stages in PR History.” (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, h.25).
- Press-Agency
- Public Information
- Two-Way Asymmetric
- Two-Way Symmetric

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References: