

The 3 together are often limited to that 10%+ who will engage.

- **As a counseling tool**, this is a way to explain why decisions that override the desires or perceptions of stakeholders cause issues to arise -- usually a costly & unnecessary occurrence. *Issues start with management, not outside (or internal) agitators.*
- **It is also a way to manage issue anticipation**, by focusing on which stakeholders are known to be skittish about which potential decisions -- then modeling how the 3 types of publics will fall out & what their response will likely be.

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

¶ **Vital lesson from Chrysler-Daimler Benz merger.** Enunciated by Chrysler CEO Bob Eaton when asked how he'll measure the merger's success: "I look at the top line & bottom line. The most important is the bottom line. I think it's highly likely we'll be the (leader) in gross profit.... *The least important statistics are sales volume.*" Profit counts, not market share. Illustrates how strategy has changed for the wiser in just a few years.

- **Added interest for practitioners:** He & most other analysts see the biggest barrier as merging 2 distinct cultures. If the bottom line is achieved, pr's role in motivating & communicating culture will be a key factor. One more non-financial indicator of success or failure.

¶ **U. Maryland controversy ends with whole pr sequence moving** to Dep't of Communication -- B.A., M.A. & Ph.D programs. This is the speech dep't, so pr moves away from journalism -- increasing the number of sequences linked to speech, now estimated to have over half the pr students. A prominent program like Maryland's, led by renowned teachers & researchers Jim & Lauri Grunig, will add further luster to the speech side of the house. PRSA, IABC, NSPRA & the other prof'l societies had better forge links with the Nat'l Com'n Ass'n (formerly Speech Com'n Ass'n). (Copy of detailed news release from [prp](#))

¶ **Project Vote Smart is a non-partisan pa tool** that can tell you: 1) a candidate's position on any issue, 2) who's contributing to his/her campaign, 3) what *hasn't* been reported by the media ([prp](#) 10/14/96). Based at Oregon State (Corvallis), info bank is tended by trained volunteers sitting at computers to give immediate responses. ([www.vote-smart.org](#), or 1-888-VOTE-SMART)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

RETIRES. June Barber, [prp](#)'s associate editor & with the newsletter 18 yrs, gives up deadline fever to commence a

freelance writing career -- on other subjects, she insists, at least at first. Family issues are her major interest.

PRACTITIONERS HAVE STAKE IN CONGRESSIONAL CENSUS DEBATE

Why would anyone oppose the most accurate possible Census data? Same reason advertisers & tv stations stay with the flawed Nielsen ratings & oppose accurate audience measurement methodologies: inaccurate data plays into their hands. Figures lie, liars figure.

Even tho it has become a partisan issue, pr should care -- on 2 counts:

1. **Census data is essential basic research, vital to understanding publics.** Especially so for org'ns that deal with "everyone" & need trustworthy data for cities or smaller Census tracts -- utilities, schools, healthcare, gov't agencies and all marketers
2. **The argument is over statistical sampling.** By making this methodology a subject of political debate, Congress is questioning a basic pr research tool -- and impugning methodologies vital to pr data gathering. The field is already under enough pressure from the "spin" critics

Marketing pr particularly should be concerned. Purchase growth for many products, especially basic items, increasingly comes from lower income spending increases, where higher income groups have maxxed out. It is lower income sectors that are missed in Censuses.

REASONS CONGRESS SHOULD TREAT THE ISSUE ETHICALLY, NOT PARTISANLY

- **Use of sampling is estimated to produce accuracy of 0.1;** now 4.4% of African-Americans are not counted, as one example
- **The non-partisan Congressional Research Service** of the Library of Congress says that without sampling, states where the GOP now rules will lose seats in Congress -- but still it is ideologically opposed
- **Sampling was originally proposed by the Bush administration** -- but Republicans are the ones now opposing it
- **Sampling has been tested & endorsed by a Nat'l Academy of Sciences panel** commissioned by Congress & the American Statistical Ass'n
- **There are 7 million Census "tracts,"** neighborhoods of 1,700 households -- so a door-to-door count is clearly impossible (the process starts with mail, then tries to pick up the missing door-to-door -- and only then uses sampling to estimate those missed)

HOW VITAL CENSUS DATA IS TO PR

Besides basic demographic info like age, gender, ethnicity, marriage status, education levels & even size of households, it's the source of socio-economic data like home use of computers, distribution of the elderly & other age groups, state & local taxes & a wealth of social & lifestyle info. It is invaluable to business. No one but the feds could gather such data.

What's going on in Washington revolves around the use of Census figures to determine Congressional districts in each state. If everyone is counted, that may mean change in some states. Avoiding change is the driver -- and to hell with truth & ethics (i.e. Congress acting as usual).

MONICAGATE'S 2 OTHER LESSONS: REINFORCES DISCONNECT BETWEEN CAPITOL & PUBLIC; SHOWS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS STILL RIFE

- Point 1 demonstrates again the importance of grassroots action -- since the Beltway today is normally out-of-touch (see the following article & pr 5/11/98 & 12/15/97)
- Since large pockets of Americans are revealing their prurience, self-righteousness & immaturity (no surprise) -- and transference of their own vices & issues onto others is their catharsis of choice (no surprise) -- 2 programs must be in place to bulletproof every org'n:

1. *Issue anticipation*: what's happening out there & could it hit home? (See pr 8/31/92 re issue anticipation teams, or contact us for a model)
2. *Continuous monitoring of stakeholders*: precisely what are they doing, thinking, feeling at this moment? (See pr's workbook, *Practical, Actionable Research For Public Relations Purposes -- With Case Studies*, for descriptions of several methodologies for such monitoring)

Your org'n, issue, product or service could be the target at any time. Public catharsis could be aimed squarely at you.

This is PR101...yet the evidence is the great majority of practitioners have neither of these programs in operation.

RELATED STUDY GIVES PROOF OF OFFICIALDOM'S LOSS OF TOUCH

Only 55% of the policy outcomes decided by Congress & the Administration coincided with the preferences of a majority of the public, according to a study in *Public Opinion Quarterly* covering the period 1980-93. Using standard databases of national surveys, Alan Monroe of Ill. State U. investigated 566 issues.

- **It's getting worse.** A similar study covering 1960-79 found consistency between policy & public opinion 63% of the time -- not exactly reflective of citizen sentiment, but elected officials are supposed to apply some judgment & not just allow mob rule

- **Least consistency was in the broad category of political reform (17%),** with social welfare and economic & labor policy next (both 51%)
- **Most consistent categories (@ 67%): energy/environment & foreign affairs**
- **On specific domestic issues Washington followed the people's lead most on** environmental protection (83%), education (82%) & drugs (80%)
- **Washington was least responsive on reforming gov't structure & powers** (15%), gun control (25%) & campaign finance reform (27%)

2 NOTEWORTHY IMPLICATIONS

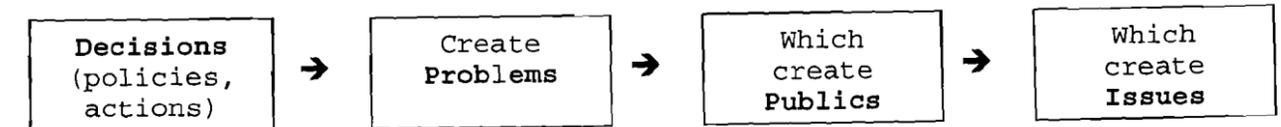
1) **Behavior matters most.** Non-response on gun control shows again that attitudes & opinion give way before activism. The people may want guns controlled -- but do little about it. On the other side, the NRA is still "the most powerful lobby in Washington." They work at it.

2) **The perception by policymakers that environmental issues have such wide support** -- and probably the personal support of these officials -- that these topics have highest consistency between policy & public opinion.

(Details from Monroe, 4600 Political Science, Ill. State U., Normal Ill. 61790-4600; copy of paper from pr)

GRUNIG'S PARADIGM: SUPERB ISSUE ANTICIPATION & PLANNING TOOL

This, says the longtime researcher, is where pr fits into organizational operations & adds most value:



The most noticeable element of this guide to clear pr thinking is that publics are subsidiaries of stakeholder groups -- not vice versa.

- Stakeholder groups are people who *should* care & be involved because the subject could or will affect them
- Nevertheless they contain large contingents who don't get the message, can't be bothered, just plain don't care or have such barriers that they won't do anything about the issue
- These segments together can be as high as 90% of the stakeholder group

The viable term for those who do get excited about the issue is therefore publics. He postulates 3 types:

1. Long haul -- those interested in the full ramifications of the topic
2. Special interest -- concerned only about certain elements of the topic
3. Hot button -- aroused only by emotionally debated elements