

Introduction

Tom Watson

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In this sixth and final volume in the *National Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations: Other Voices* series, the focus is on historiography and theorization of the history of public relations. In the five chapters, leading PR historians explore aspects of historiography in essays that express personal views. They have reflected on the five preceding books of national histories, of which two have contributed chapters. The authors have also considered recent developments in historiography, the philosophy of history and historical sociology.

The series editor Tom Watson opens the book with an exploration of themes that arose from the five books; German PR historian, Gunter Bentele make a case for stratification models to interpret the emergence of PR; U.S. historian Margot Opdycke Lamme considers the role of biography in the history of public relations; Jacquie L'Etang, from Scotland, discusses the philosophy of history from a sociological standpoint; and German PR historian Stefan Wehmeier argues for a different approach to PR historiography from the New Annalistic stance.

The opening chapter, 'What in the world is Public Relations' explores the history of public relations in a meta-analysis of 47 chapters covering 74 countries in the five books the series. Tom Watson considers the Antecedents, Springboards, Restraints that have shaped public relations and the Historiography applied to interpret them in an attempt to identify common factors in the development of public relations, as well as important differences in the tapestry of histories that the series has produced. He found there were few generalizable factors other than, in many (but not all) countries, that public relations' expansion since the middle of the 20th century has been fostered by political democracy and increasingly open economies.

Gunter Bentele's chapter, 'Problems of Public Relations Historiography and Perspectives of a Functional-Integrative Stratification Model', challenges the widely-held view that 'all communication and representation is PR' and argues that while there is a pre-history of public relations, the 'real' history of public relations as organized activity commenced in Germany, at least, in the early 19th century. He applies his 'functional-integrative'

stratification model with its layers of historical activity in order to argue the case for historiography that is criteria-based and linked to the development (and backward steps) in practice and theory.

The focus on biography in Margot Opdycke Lamme's chapter "Where the Quiet Work is Done": Biography in Public Relations' addresses the 'Great Men' approach which has been dominant in U.S. approaches to the history of PR. She contends that a wider, more diverse and more questioning approach is needed in the use of biography for historical analysis and critique: 'As a field we have clung to drawing within the lines for long enough. We need to go back to finger painting, to the traces of our history, to start with ourselves and see where to follow the handprints of our profession.'

Jacque L'Etang's chapter, 'Where is public relations historiography? Philosophy of history, historiography and public relations', makes a case for the history of public relations to be approached from sociological perspectives in order to identify and critique the societal role of public relations 'within the context of social change'.

The fifth chapter from Stefan Wehmeier, 'Historiography (and Theory) of Public Relations History', discusses positivist and postmodern approaches before opting for a reflective and constructivist analysis based on the 'Neue Annalistik' (New Annalistic) theory of history that has been proposed by German historiographer Lucian Hölscher.

Added together, these chapters comprise a major review of philosophical approaches to the history of public relations and the historiography of the field. They approach the debate from different perspectives and also review important recent contributions from other historians more generally and historians of public relations, in particular. The chapters are a loud, emphatic coda to the *National Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations: Other Voices* series which has widened the knowledge base of the history of public relations around the world.

Historiography - Historiography - Methodology of historiography: This concluding section surveys contemporary historical practice and theory. As the previous section has demonstrated, there are many branches of history today, each with different kinds of evidence, particular canons of interpretation, and distinctive conventions of writing. This diversity has led some to wonder whether the term history still designates an integral body of or approach to knowledge. Although the emphasis of this article falls on what historians share, it is well to remember that deviations from these norms are all. Much of the pre-history of public relations is linked with the growth and maintenance of religion, one of the most basic and cohesive aspects of society throughout the ages. John the Baptist is recognized in the social history of Christianity as the precursor or advance man who was effective in generating among his publics an anticipation and enthusiasm for Jesus Christ. Use of public relations strategies and tactics was not limited to the Christian church. In 6th Century Northern Africa, the prophet Mohammed sometimes retired to an out-of-the-way place to ponder problems facing his people, eventually to emerge with writings that he identified as the word of Allah. These writings, eventually assembled as the Koran, thus received a credibility that led to easy acceptance by his followers. Historiography, literally, is the study not of history but of the writing of history. In modern usage, this term covers a wide range of related but distinct areas of inquiry. From a pedagogical point of view, it refers to basic training in the nuts and bolts of how history is written (such as the techniques of locating and evaluating sources, providing documentation, preparing a manuscript, and so on). Modern academic historical literature on the Iranian world, while certainly substantial and growing in quantity, is still relatively small when compared to that on Europe or the United States, where an awareness of the plethora of interpretations, revisionisms, and counter-revisions in the vast amount of scholarly literature is essential to the study of various topics. -Public Relations has been used for centuries now. -Greek word for PR- Semantikos- meaning Semantics. He used PR agents to publicize his circus before the show came to town. Also, Barnum captured people's attention by creating large, colorful attention-grabbing posters to get the future crowd excited for the upcoming show.