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Abstract

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COLLECTIVISM AND INDIVIDUALISM

IN A PROFESSIONALISM STUDY OF

PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS AND JOURNALISTS

Graduate Research Paper

May, 1989

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This paper

COLLECTIVISM AND INDIVIDUALISM

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by

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is submitted in fulfillment of the Research Paper requirement of
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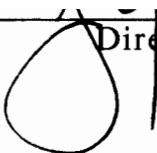May 9, 1989
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The Adversarial Relationship

The adversarial relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners is nothing new. No matter in what era or in what context, there has always been friction between those who mind the media gates and those whose livelihoods depend upon getting information disseminated. It is inherent, it is argued here, for cultural discourse of public relations practitioners and journalists. Several studies examined the adversarial relationship, and most had consistent findings -- the two occupations view each other quite differently. Stegall and Sanders (1986) indicated that journalists see their roles and the roles of public relations practitioners as distinctly different. They wrote that journalists believe they have a responsibility to be the public's eyes and ears, while thinking of public relations people as promoters, not journalists. Journalists expect public relations persons to show only the positive elements of their clients or organizations and shield the negative aspects. Stegall and Sanders summarized their thoughts this way: "The reporter thinks his own motivations are more honorable than those of the public relations director" (p. 343). Tunstall (1971) explained that journalists see themselves above reproach and the "crass commercialism" (p. 72) of public relations practitioners.

It might seem odd that such an adversarial relationship exists. Historically, public relations and journalism

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education usually evolved out of the same journalism schools, and many public relations practitioners formerly worked as journalists. In addition, each occupation has its own rules of conduct, which should preclude unethical and unacceptable behavior.

Yet, common sense indicates the adversarial relationship exists, and empirical studies prove it. Most of the results of the studies comparing public relations to journalism can be exemplified in a statement by Stegall and Sanders (1986): "PR as a profession is still seen by journalists as a bastard child in terms of status" (p. 344). The reasons journalists gave for their beliefs on public relations were their perceptions of poorer job performance and lower ethical conduct by public relations practitioners in addition to perceiving the field of public relations as having less honorable intentions. Stegall and Sanders also reported that the journalists agreed with the statement "reporters sometimes look down their noses at PR people," while public relations practitioners disagreed.

Kopenhaver, Martinson, and Ryan (1984) looked at how Florida public relations practitioners and editors viewed each other. They learned that the editors they surveyed had negative attitudes toward public relations. The editors agreed with the statements "public relations practitioners too frequently insist on promoting products, services, and other activities which do not legitimately deserve promotion"

and "public relations material is usually publicity disguised as news." Kopenhaver et al., found that Florida editors disagreed somewhat that public relations, as an occupation, was the status equal of journalism. However, in the researchers' separate perceived status rankings, editors were more definitive when they ranked public relations practitioners 15th out of 16 occupational fields (ahead of only politicians). In a similar study in Texas by Aronhoff (cited in Kopenhaver et al., 1984), journalists ranked practitioners even lower--last.

Jeffers (1977), in a study of relative status between public relations and news personnel, also found that journalists did not think public relations practitioners in general, or the ones the journalists used as sources, were equal in status to themselves. Practitioners, however, considered themselves equal in status with the specific journalists with whom they regularly associated, but the practitioners also considered journalists in general slightly higher in status than other public relations practitioners.

Stegall and Sanders (1986) wrote that public relations and news people have been trying for some time to define each other's roles and set the boundaries of their working relationships. "In the process, misunderstandings have occurred and role stereotypes have taken place" (p. 341).

Code Conflicts

A very likely cause for the adversarial relationship and

role misunderstandings is that each field has its own
cultural code system, and usually the two are in conflict.
The public relations code system is group oriented, or
collectivistic, while the journalism code system is
individualistic. On the surface, the code systems are
apparent: public relations practitioners are organization
people -- spokespersons for organizations and team players
who work in unison with or for others. Conversely,
journalists usually work alone, attempting to individually
scoop the competitors. Obviously, most journalists work in
organizations, such as newspapers or magazines; however, they
have a detachment from organizations. Swartz (1985) stated
that even if one is part of a bureaucracy, as most
journalists are by writing for a publication, one may "follow
the calling of the occupation" (p. 45) rather than the
bureaucratic bondage of an organization. In a sense,
journalists work for no one, except society and its right to
know.

     The cultural code systems of public relations
practitioners and journalists go much deeper than the former
being more group oriented and the latter being more
independent. Public relations practitioners emphasize the
macro aspect, or the "big picture" in their work.
Journalists spotlight the micro, or the single aspect in
their jobs. The practitioner will publicize an entire group,
team, or organization, and the journalist will highlight only

an individual, perhaps a representative member or the leader, captain, or president.

This writer has personally encountered both codes. As a newspaper reporter wanting to write a story about a successful high school football team, this author wanted to highlight the star running back. The coach, who was also playing the role of public relations person for his team, wanted the entire squad to be the subject of the article, not wanting an individual to be singled out. A few years later as a college public relations practitioner, this writer sent a news release to the news media announcing an event and attributing the announcement to the college. In one newspaper which printed the release, this author's name was substituted in place of the college name as the source of the announcement. Both examples clearly show the individualistic culture of the news media and the collectivistic culture of public relations.

The public relations practitioner will also look at a phenomenon from a contextual perspective, taking into account background, causes, short-term effects, long-term effects, and singular events. The events to the practitioner are only a small part of the phenomenon. The journalist, however, will key into the single events of the phenomenon and disregard most of the causes of the event. Snow (1983) termed this "event-centered reporting," writing that it is "based on the assumption that particular facts decide a case

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rather than the subtle construction of a perspective that
serves to define the so-called facts" (p. 41).

A third and by all means not final cultural code
difference between public relations and journalism is
cooperation and conflict. Cooperation is a code of the
collectivistic, group-oriented culture, and it is emphasized
in public relations. Conflict is a code of the journalistic
culture, and it is often a criterion for newsworthiness.
Snow (1983) wrote that United States foreign relations are
often portrayed in the news in terms of conflict: "Rather
than discussing how and why all parties compete and support
each other's ongoing competition for status and power within
their respective spheres of influence, we constantly get the
picture of international conflict" (p. 41).

If there are such differences in cultural codes, perhaps
they explain why there is tension between public relations
practitioners and journalists. To consider that probability,
this study will examine previous studies of attempts to
account for the differences, namely so-called
"professionalism studies." They attributed the friction
between public relations and journalists to differences in
various professional value orientations. By categorizing the
value orientations in terms of the three codes outlined
above, one may be able to explain why there are such
differences in value orientations, and thus why there is
professional friction.

Before doing a code analysis, though, there is a need to explain professionalism studies in general.

Professionalism Studies

Professionalism studies originally were developed to determine to what extent journalists had professional orientations. In other words, could journalists be considered professionals like physicians and attorneys?

McLeod and Hawley in 1964 developed the methodology to determine the professionalism levels of communicators in what turned out to be a much-replicated study. They studied the professional orientations of a sample of 115 editorial writers at two Milwaukee newspapers. The researchers believed journalism was an emerging profession and that its members possessed some of the attributes of professionalism. The analysis was comparative in nature and was intended to explain the important criteria of professionalization that could be used in all occupations and professions.

In their study, McLeod and Hawley used a list of 24 job characteristics as measures of one's professional orientation. Using sociological studies of professionalization in other occupations, they divided the 24 characteristics into 12 which those who are professionally oriented ought to value highly and a dozen in which they should value less.

Their methodology suggested that professionally oriented

people should desire a job, for example, that allows them to
use their occupational skills and knowledge, provides an
essential service, permits free expression, has an effect on
the client and organization, and has competent colleagues and
supervisors. The professionally oriented person should not
be as concerned with such "non-professional, careerist"
job aspects as salary, security, prestige, and personal
relations.

On a scale of one to seven ranging from strongly agree
to strongly disagree, respondents answered the 24
professionalism characteristics questions. McLeod and Hawley
summed the "professionalism" scores and subtracted the
"non-professional, careerist" scores. The respondents
with the highest net scores were determined to be the most
professional.

The McLeod and Hawley (1964) behaviorally oriented study
indicated there was cause to speak of professional
orientation among journalists. Their study indicated that
those having professional outlooks tended to exhibit
distinctive patterns of judgment and differing attitudes.
The professionally oriented journalists also exhibited
differences which distinguished them in their actions,
thoughts, and beliefs from their less professionally oriented
coworkers and colleagues.

The McLeod and Hawley professionalism measure was
applied by many researchers in the years to follow. A sample

of these included analyses of public relations practitioners, television newscasters, photojournalists, advertising agency personnel, foreign journalists, and foreign public relations practitioners. A few studies indicated some interesting correlations between desirable attributes and public relations practitioners who were more professionally oriented than their peers. Wright (1979) said the social responsibility level in public relations practitioners increased as professionalization occurred. Stephens (1981), who used a professionalism methodology other than McLeod and Hawley's, learned that military public affairs officers who had achieved high levels of professionalism spent significantly more time conducting formal and informal research and spent more time advising management than those officers with low levels of professionalism.

In the first study of its kind, Nayman, McKee, and Lattimore (1977) compared the professionalism levels of Colorado public relations personnel and print journalists. Nayman et al. agreed that journalism was an emerging profession within the communication field. Because public relations was a different, but interrelated communication field, the assumption was made that "a systematic investigation of professionalism among public relations personnel would serve as an initial step toward evaluating public relations as an emerging media profession" (p. 492). They found public relations people seemed to rate both

"professional" and "non-professional, careerist" items as
more important than did the journalists. This indicated that
the public relations practitioners scored higher on the
professionalism part of the study. The results also
indicated that practitioners and journalists were also
concerned with career aspects such as salary and job
security.

While it is unknown whether the adversarial relationship
between journalists and public relations practitioners
encouraged the Nayman et al. project, professionalism
studies of these two related but separate fields may allow
practitioners and journalists to better understand the
cultures of each occupation. This may, in turn, lessen the
friction between public relations and journalism.

Hypothesis

This paper will attempt to design a study to show that
the collectivistic culture codes of public relations
practitioners and the individualistic culture codes of
journalists determine how they will rank job characteristics
in a professionalism study using the McLeod and Hawley
methodology. The job characteristics on the professionalism
survey will be separated into "collectivistic" and
"individualistic" categories as determined by a three-member
panel. It is the hypothesis of this study that public
relations practitioners will score higher on the job

characteristics which are considered collectivistic and
that journalists will score higher on the job characteristics
which are considered individualistic.

Professionalism

Part of the discussions about whether certain
occupations are professions or not rests upon the definition
and explanation of the word. Vollmer and Mills (1966), while
not defining profession, detailed their precise usage of the
word as well as the words "professionalization" and
"professionalism." They preferred to use "profession" only
as a comparative theoretical model which represents an ideal
occupational group and not one that actually exists.
Professionalization, on the other hand, stands for a
process in which an occupation is seen changing its
characteristics toward the direction of a profession. They
called professionalism the ideology and related activities of
an occupational group which is hoping for professional
status. Further explanation showed the relatedness of the
latter two terms:

> Professionalism as an ideology may induce members of
> many occupational groups to strive to become
> professional, but at the same time we can see that many
> occupational groups that express the ideology of
> professionalism in reality may not be very advanced in
> regard to professionalization. Professionalism may be a
> necessary constituent of professionalization, but
> professionalism is not a sufficient cause for the entire
> professionalization process. (p. viii)

Vollmer and Mills (1966) said flexibility is needed

concerning the terminology so as to avoid premature agreement upon exact definitions. Cogan (1953), after making "a demonstrably adequate search of relevant literature" (p. 34), denied any possibility of deciding a satisfactory definition of profession. (While the Vollmer and Mills and the Cogan sources are relatively old, they have been consistently used by professionalism researchers. The depth and insight of their explanations and interpretations of professionalism make them relevant for this paper. Cogan, who used various academic disciplines, made one of the earliest attempts to isolate and define "profession" and erase ambiguity from the term. Vollmer and Mills´ interpretations of the professions have been used by researchers as late as 1986 by Pratt.)

Cogan (1953), however, did offer his own definition of profession:

> A profession is a vocation whose practice is founded upon an understanding of the theoretical structure of some department of learning or science, and upon the abilities accompanying such understanding. This understanding and these abilities are applied to the vital practical affairs of man. The practices of the profession are modified by knowledge of a generalized nature and by the accumulated wisdom and experience of mankind, which serve to correct the errors of specialism. The profession, serving the vital needs of man, considers its first ethical imperative to be altruistic service to the client. (p. 49)

While "all professions and professionals fall short of being consistent with the ideal [professional] model" (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1985, p. 73), there is some basic agreement on the items which must be met for an occupation to be considered a profession. Researchers (including Cogan

(1953); Vollmer and Mills (1966); Grunig and Hunt (1984); and Cutlip, Center, and Broom) have explained that for an occupation to become a profession, the occupation must (a) serve in an unique and essential manner, (b) stress intellectual skill, (c) have a body of knowledge from a long period of specialized instruction, (d) be given autonomy, (e) have practitioners who will take responsibility for their actions and judgments, (f) stress service over personal economic gain, (g) create an inclusive governing organization, and (h) have a code of ethics.

A look at professionalism from an historical perspective may better explain how professions developed and how occupations other than the traditional professions have been considered as emerging professions. In Europe at the beginning of the 19th century, there were only three recognized professions in practice: divinity, law, and medicine (Larson, 1977). Within each of these traditional professions was a hierarchy of levels with the highest ones usually going to those with the best family connections. The French Revolution had begun to signify to France and elsewhere that careers would be open to those with talent, not the correct blood lines. Larson wrote that civil service reforms in Britain in the mid 1800s also promoted the rise of modern professions.

The most important phenomenon in the evolution of modern professions, however, was the Industrial Revolution in

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the second half of the 19th century. Johnson (1972) wrote

that technological and scientific developments matured with

new procedures providing a base for emerging occupations.

"Needs which had been restricted to the upper stratum of

society filtered down and outwards so that medicine, law, and

architecture, for example, were no longer small, socially

prescribed cliques, but large associations servicing

competing status groups..." (p. 52). Thus, according to

Johnson, the Industrial Revolution created a middle class

which created an increasing need for professional

services, and also provided new members for the expanding

ranks of professions.

Larson (1977) stated that although professions did not

gain their present status in the United States until this

century, they matured in America following the Civil War as

"an adaptive response" (p. 105) to industrialization and the

centralization of political, economic, and administrative

power.

The professions have their detractors. Larson (1977)

stated that the critics charged that professions attempt to

monopolize and control both the marketplace and social

status. In other words, the professionals attempt to slow or

even stop access into the profession, to make the

professionals' status more important and their goods and

services more valuable. They must monopolize their

competence and demonstrate that their competence is superior

to others. "Professionalization is thus an attempt to translate one order of scarce resources -- special knowledge and skills -- into another -- social and economic rewards" (p. xvii).

Birkhead (1982) also said critics condemn the professions for their occupational isolation. The professionalization process, for most emerging professions, is an effort to secure autonomy, authority, and prestige. Professionals or would-be professionals attempt to accumulate material gain, influence, and power for their members, while strengthening their independence in organizational settings. Professionalization, according to Birkhead, emulates the "structure and practice of traditional professions which have gained social prominence..." (p. 4). Specific occupations, such as medicine and law, have been noted for corruption and greed, "taking their toll on individual integrity" (p. 1).

Birkhead (1982) explained, however, that a dilemma arises from the professions' equally avid supporters: "The [professions] are credited with the orderly fulfillment of fundamental needs -- health, justice, social and psychological adjustment, mass communication" (p. 2). The professions are also havens for altruism, objectivity, efficiency, research, skill, and knowledge. "The predicament presented by professionalism is a problem of choice and decision for which a calculus of benefit and loss is still being formulated" (p. 2).

<u>A</u> <u>Profession</u> <u>or</u> <u>Trade?</u>

Medicine, law, and divinity are considered traditional professions with little disagreement from external sources. During this century, other groups, such as those consisting of funeral directors and advertising personnel, have ignited semantic battles from inside and out by calling their occupations professions. Public relations and journalism also claim to ascend the level of professionalism.

Wilensky (1964) wrote that while many occupations are working toward professional identification, few will ever attain it. Yet, several researchers have indicated public relations and journalism are meeting the criteria for professionalism, with journalism having shown the first signs of professionalization. Johnstone, Slawski, and Bowman (1976) explained that the principal direction of American journalism during the first half of this century was molding itself as a profession, with the formation of professional associations and schools of journalism, the articulation of codes of professional ethics, and the maturation of the philosophy of objective and accurate reporting. Birkhead (1982) said reporters were even edging toward professional development as early as the 1880s.

Swartz (1985) maintained that the professionalization of journalism during the middle of this century has served to upgrade public relations (in particular, Pentagon public affairs officers) into a similar status in later years.

Because many public affairs officers had been working journalists allowed "for a rather transparent window" (p. 272) between the two fields:

> Some had believed that journalists, particularly those in the Washington press corps, were professionalized. It therefore became to some a point of pride to make similar strides for public relations...For some, the professionalized values of the journalistic field were transformed in various ways into the public relations field. (p. 272)

Swartz (1985) went on to explain that government publicists changed rapidly during the late 1950s and early 1960s, somewhat because of the environment. First, technological changes demanded better informed and "professional government publicists as deadlines came sooner and sooner and news programming and printed news material expanded in size, frequency, and scope" (p. 256). Second, journalism saw itself more specialized during the 1960s. The general assignment reporters became beat writers. With greater specialization, there correspondingly had to be a more sophisticated public affairs community. Swartz indicated that there was public recognition that the role of the press was becoming more professionalized, yet the history of public relations was behind the times. "Better publicists, with more professionalized credentials, had to be found to attend to the changing demands of the rising class of the press corps" (p. 257). One could assume a similar evolution of the news media and public relations existed outside of the Washington press corps and the Pentagon.

A review of the literature from other researchers (e.g.,
Gitter & Jaspers, 1982; Kruckeberg, 1984; Wright, 1979;
McKee, Nayman, & Lattimore, 1975; Ranney, 1977; and Nayman,
McKee, & Lattimore, 1977) also indicates there is evidence
that both occupations and the individual practitioners and
journalists are showing signs of professionalization. They
indicated that public relations and journalism meet many, if
not most, of the requirements of a profession.

For example, using the eight criteria previously listed,
for an occupation to be considered a profession, it must:

Serve in an unique and essential manner. Public
relations and journalism do indeed provide a service to the
public, one that is relatively unmatched by other
occupations. Public relations practitioners manage the
communication between an organization and its publics (Grunig
& Hunt, 1984). Journalists provide the public what it needs
to know through mass media.

Stress intellectual skill. Both public relations and
journalism stress intellectual skills as opposed to manual
abilities. Johnson (1972) stated that when a strong demand
for occupational skills from a large group of consumers
exists, only then can professionalism fully emerge.

Have a body of knowledge from a long period of
specialized instruction. Newsom (1984) pointed out that this
criterion may be difficult for public relations to fulfill:
"Since public relations can't even agree on a definition of

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public relations, there is some debate over what the specialized knowledge should be..." (p. 19). However, to become accredited by the Public Relations Society of America, practitioners must pass an extensive examination. The exam can be passed only by someone with a long knowledge of public relations.

Be given autonomy. Birkhead (1982) wrote that there are inherent difficulties in the contention that journalism (public relations could also be added), performed in an organizational structure as a for-profit business, fit a professional model copied after medicine and law "whose professional sanctions were legitimatized in the licensing of individual practice" (p. 59). Swartz (1985) wrote, however, that the idea of a professional in a model private practice, such as the physician or attorney, is somewhat dated because of the growth of organizations.

Have practitioners who will take responsibility for their actions and judgments. It is probably safe to assume that if professionals and would-be professionals value freedom and autonomy on the job, they will be responsible for their actions and judgments to protect their freedom and autonomy.

Stress service over personal economic gain. Grunig and Hunt (1984) and Windahl and Rosengren (1978) agreed that public relations people and journalists, like those in traditional professions, ought to stress professional values

over extrinsic gain. However, both teams of researchers learned that professionals can also value service and extrinsic rewards simultaneously. Professionals are capable of having professional as well as careerist values.

Create an inclusive governing organization. Public relations and journalism do not have governing organizations in the same manner as medicine or law have their ruling bodies. Public relations has the Public Relations Society of America, however, which has a judicial process which can review and censor its members. Journalism has several professional organizations with rules of conduct.

Have a code of ethics. The Public Relations Society of America, for example, has its Code of Professional Standards for the Practice of Public Relations. Journalism likewise has codes of ethics, although they are not universal among all journalists.

Tirone (1979) wrote that he expected the professionalization of public relations to follow the lead of other occupations which grew into professions. This would begin with a differentiation of title, such as public relations counselor or APR (Accredited in Public Relations) rather than publicity person. Eventually, self-regulation in the form of an organization would assume more control and would set membership criteria. A state legislature would eventually create a professional segment of practitioners, most likely giving the status to persons already in the field

and setting new, rigid standards for newcomers. The last step would involve education through specified curricula, evolvement of a body of knowledge, and certification, probably through a college degree.

Despite the perennial arguments as to whether public relations is a profession and if it should ever attempt to become a profession, the field is showing signs that it wants professionalism. Birkhead (1982) stated, "Professionalism remains as a synonym for identity" (p. xxxi). Cutlip (1984) wrote that public relations may never become a profession, but that everything which can be done to bring professionalism to the field should be supported. Grunig and Hunt (1984) stated that practitioners believe public relations has to become a profession:

> The majority of public relations practitioners since Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays changed the field in the early 1900s have argued, however, that public relations must become a profession. On the one hand, public relations practitioners will have much more respect for themselves and their careers if they meet professional standards. Eventually, professional status will also gain respect from journalists and the rest of society. (p. 63)

While it is easy to assume that everyone connected to public relations wants the occupation to improve, many believe professionalism is not necessary or it will need a major boost from accreditation, certification, licensing, or changes in attitude. Wright (1981) wrote that with voluntary accreditation, all that public relations can be is an occupation by people with similar jobs. "True professional

status might not exist for public relations until there is some form of legal certification of practitioners" (p. 60). Bailey (1984) and Brown (1985) called for graduate-level education to better qualify practitioners, with Brown asking that accreditation or certification be approved by a board.

Stephens (1981) questioned if professionalism was the best measuring device for public relations. He considered job performance to be the way to improve the field. Nowling (1981) thought practitioners could think and behave like professionals through the qualities of responsibility, discipline, and accountability. Wilcox (1984) thought professionalism would advance if more firms in the public relations field refused to promote information that is in bad taste or is misleading, and if they would not work with clients who do not serve the public interest. However, even before the early communicator professionalism studies took place, Schramm (1957) wrote that mass communication may be a profession.

> But the fact that mass communication does not fit the pattern of a traditional profession is no reason why we cannot expect professional standards, attitudes, and behavior form it. Indeed, we can argue that an occupation which is organized, as mass communication is, around a very high concept of public service is necessarily a profession and its members must be professionals. (p. 346)

The above literature indicates that public relations and journalism are far from ideal models of profession. Yet, this paper has detailed the results of empirical studies

which have indicated that practitioners and journalists show signs of professionalization. Also, a point by point check of the eight criteria of professionalism indicates public relations and journalism could qualify as emerging professions. Because there is strong evidence that public relations and journalism are indeed close to the traditional model of profession, the professionalism studies of these fields served a purpose. They were reliable examinations of the changing characteristics in two different, but interrelated communication fields. This fact means the proposed collectivistic-individualistic methodology of this study may lead to a further understanding of the McLeod and Hawley methodology and eventually a better understanding of the professionalism characteristics of public relations and journalism.

Collectivism and Individualism

Social scientists will likely forever debate the virtues and vices of collectivism and individualism. While no attempt will be made in this paper to moralize the issue, an attempt will be made to explain these concepts.

Quite simply put, the individualistic culture emphasizes the individual; people whose guiding thoughts are in their individual best interests. A collectivistic culture stresses that the group takes precedence over the individual. The individualistic person values not only the rights of the

individual, but also the right to be left free by society. The collectivist believes the interest of the many outweigh the interest of one (Gudykunst, Yoon, & Nishida, 1987).

In his classical explanation, Eliot (1910) wrote this about individualism and collectivism:

> Individualism values highly not only the rights of the single person, but also the initiative of the individual left free by society. Collectivism values highly social rights, objects to an individual initiative which does mischief when left free, holds that the interest of the many override the interest of the individual, whenever the two interests conflict, and should control social action, and yet does not propose to extinguish the individual, but only to restrict him for the common good, including his own. (p. 2)

Hui and Triandis (1986) detailed a comparison of collectivism and individualism from a cluster of various behaviors and beliefs, which fall under one of seven categories:

Implications of decisions for others. Individualists determine if personal gain warrants their action. Their major emphasis is the self, and at the extreme, the nuclear family. Collectivists decide to act after considering the consequences for a wider group.

Sharing material resources. Individualists value self-sufficiency and independence. Each person has her or his own personal items; each family its own family articles. Collectivists strive to maintain social relationships through sharing by keeping open a social network of reciprocation through loaning, borrowing, and giving.

Sharing non-material resources. Because individualists tend to care for themselves, a non-material item, such as time, is less likely to be reciprocated by an individualist. Collectivists expect to reciprocate a resource they will never get back (such as time) just to strengthen the social network.

Susceptibility to social influence. Collectivists are more likely to be influenced by someone or something than are individualists. Thus, collectivists are more likely to conform than individualists. Hui and Triandis admit this explanation is too simplified and requires additional research. However, they said it is generally accepted that collectivists will adhere to the group to avoid rejection. Collectivists value harmony, so conforming to preserve interpersonal relationships happens even if nonconformity is more beneficial to collectivists.

Self-presentation and "saving face." Collectivists are concerned with gaining the approval of others and are shamed if they do not get it. Individualists are less motivated by shame or guilt, being more answerable to the self. They are less concerned with group acceptance.

Sharing outcomes. True individualists are not affected positively or negatively by others, and the individualists' actions seem to them to not affect others as well. Hui and Triandis wrote that individualists may believe people can do what they want as long as it does not interfere with others.

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On the other side are collectivists, who value

interdependence and believe one's actions may harm or help

the group. In a collectivistic society, one's misbehavior or

failure hurts the entire family or group; individualists view

the same failure with less regard.

Feeling of involvement. Collectivists share in the

outcomes of others and feel they are involved in the lives of

others enough that the others' expectations may have direct

or indirect consequences for them. Individualists, however,

have a more segmented world, and they are involved in few

peoples' lives, and then in only small, specific ways.

Hui and Triandis (1986) summarized that collectivism,

in a nutshell, is keeping others in mind. They stated,

however, that this concern is not equal to altruism, rather

it is believing survival comes from the group and not the

individual.

Individualism (Waterman, 1984) can be summarized as

having four main psychological qualities: a sense of personal

identity, or knowing who one is; self-actualization, or

fulfilling one's potential; internal locus of control, or the

perception that an event is a result of one's behavior; and

principled moral reasoning, or possessing good moral

judgment.

Critics of individualism have philosophically linked

it to unethical competition, self-containment, and alienation

(Waterman, 1984). In contrast, the principles mentioned by

the proponents of individualism come from a philosophical orientation defined by eudaimonism, freedom of choice, and ethical behavior. Considering this, Waterman stated one´s having individualistic values could be considered to promote -- not inhibit -- cooperation, helping, and many other socially-acceptible behaviors.

The above descriptions of collectivism and individualism give greater insight into the public relations practitioner collectivistic culture and the journalist individualistic culture. As Swartz (1985) wrote, practitioners appear to be organization people, an obvious collectivistic group attribute. Journalists, idealistically, believe they are independent of press ownership and beholden to no one and "only to truth and to the people of the land" (p. 44), an obvious individualistic trait.

To sum the points of this paper, it has been shown there is an adversarial relationship between journalism and public relations practitioners. It has been suggested that the cause of this relationship may be the cultural code differences in the two fields in that public relations practitioners tend to be more collectivistic and journalists tend to be more individualistic. Using this information and applying it to professionalism studies which use the McLeod and Hawley methodology, it has been hypothesized that the collectivistic-individualistic cultures of the practitioners

and journalists will influence their responses on a
professionalism questionnaire.

Methodology

To test the hypothesis, the methodology would employ
professionalism survey questionnaires, which would be sent to
the subjects in the mail. Three items will be included:
cover letter, questionnaire, and a return envelope with
postage attached. Each questionnaire will be numbered to
determine which persons need a second mailing. Experience
has shown that after two to three weeks from the original
mailing, the return rate drops off dramatically (Babbie,
1973). About three weeks following the first mailing,
reminder post cards will be sent to those who have not
responded. After two or three more weeks, another
questionnaire, return envelope, and new cover letter will be
mailed to those who have still not responded. Following the
third mailing, it is hoped 60 to 70 percent of the potential
respondents will have answered.

The questionnaires will ask the respondents for
demographic information such as, but not limited to, sex,
age, title, salary, years of experience, highest level of
education, type of organization in which they work, and
newspaper circulation, if the respondent is a journalist.
Anonymity for the respondents will be assured.

The universe of this study is the Public Relations

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Society of America (PRSA) members from Iowa listed in the current PRSA directory and journalists and editors from Iowa's daily newspapers. A random sample of each will be sent surveys.

To test the hypothesis and to obtain the professionalism levels of the public relations practitioners and the journalists within the universe, the survey will ask the respondents to indicate their choices on a professional orientation index based on the one used by McLeod and Hawley (1964) and later by other communication researchers. The survey will measure 12 "professional" and 12 "non-professional, careerist" job characteristics on a seven-point scale ranging from "extremely important" to "extremely unimportant." Most of the previous studies also used 12 professional and 12 non-professional, careerist job characteristics. A three-person panel determined whether the job characteristics are collectivistic, individualistic, or neither. Each member of the panel was given a form with instructions and sociological definitions and explanations of collectivism and individualism. Using the definitions and explanations, the panel members determined if each of the 24 job characteristics was "collectivistic," "individualistic," or "neither of the two."

Panel Results

The panel results indicate that there is enough agreement for 15 of the 24 job characteristics to be used to test the hypothesis. Of the 15 usable characteristics, eight are "professional" orientations and seven are "non-professional, careerist" orientations. In addition, nine of the 15 job characteristics were determined to be collectivistic and the remaining six were determined to be individualistic. In all, five job characteristics are professionally oriented and collectivistic (numbers 3, 8, 10, 15, and 23); three are professionally oriented and individualistic (numbers 11, 16, and 22); four are non-professionally oriented and collectivistic (numbers 4, 5, 13, and 21); and three and non-professionally oriented and individualistic (numbers 2, 12, and 14).

The three-member panel was unanimous on 10 of the job characteristics. Five of the unanimous selections were determined to be collectivistic and four were determined to be individualistic. These nine are usable in the study. The characteristic which was unanimously determined to be neither collectivistic or individualistic (number 24) will be omitted. In addition to number 24, the remaining eight non-usable job characteristics include seven in which two of the three panel members determined the characteristics to be neither individualistic or collectivistic (numbers 1, 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, and 20). The other omitted job characteristic

(number 19) had no agreement from the panel.

Conclusion

This research paper has designed a proposed study to determine if the collectivistic culture of public relations practitioners and the individualistic culture of journalism will determine how practitioners and journalists will respond to a professionalism study using the McLeod and Hawley methodology. A panel determined that 15 of the 24 job characteristics used to determine the professional orientations of practitioners and journalists in the McLeod and Hawley methodology are most likely collectivistic or individualistic.

If the hypothesis were to tested and accepted, the results could lead to a better understanding of how the cultural codes of public relations and journalism affect the individual practitioners and journalists and their role relationships.

PANEL RESULTS

15 Job Characteristics Accepted for the Proposed Study

Job characteristics which are professionally oriented and collectivistic:

3. Having a job that is valuable and essential to the community.

   __3__ Collectivistic   __0__ Individualistic

   __0__ Neither of the two

8. Having respect for the ability and competence of co-workers.

   __2__ Collectivistic   __0__ Individualistic

   __1__ Neither of the two

10. Having a job that presents opportunities to influence public thinking.

    __3__ Collectivistic   __0__ Individualistic

    __0__ Neither of the two

15. Having recognition from superiors in your organization.

    __2__ Collectivistic   __1__ Individualistic

    __0__ Neither of the two

23. Having a job in which there is ample opportunity to influence management's decision.

    __2__ Collectivistic   __1__ Individualistic

    __0__ Neither of the two

Job characteristics which are professionally oriented
and individualistic:

11. Having full use of your abilities and training.

    ___0___ Collectivistic   ___3___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

16. Having opportunities for self initiative, originality,
and self expression.

    ___0___ Collectivistic   ___3___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

22. Having a job in which you are left alone to work without
continual close supervision.

    ___0___ Collectivistic   ___3___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

Job characteristics which are non-professionally,
careerist oriented and collectivistic:

4. Having a job that brings you into contact with people.

    ___3___ Collectivistic   ___0___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

5. Having the support of co-workers.

    ___3___ Collectivistic   ___0___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

13. Having a job your family is proud of.

    ___2___ Collectivistic   ___1___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

21. Having the opportunity of being with people who are congenial and easy to work with.

    ___3___ Collectivistic   ___0___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

Job characteristics which are non-professionally, careerist oriented and individualistic:

2. Having the opportunity to get ahead in the organization for which you work.

    ___0___ Collectivistic   ___3___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

12. Having a job with prestige in the community.

    ___1___ Collectivistic   ___2___ Individualistic

    ___0___ Neither of the two

14. Having a job in which you enjoy what's involved in it.

    ___0___ Collectivistic   ___2___ Individualistic

    ___1___ Neither of the two

9 Job Characteristics Not Accepted for the Proposed Study

1. Having opportunities to learn new skills and knowledge.

    ___1___ Collectivistic   ___0___ Individualistic

    ___2___ Neither of the two

6. Having a job in a well-known and respected business or organization, etc.

    ___1___ Collectivistic   ___0___ Individualistic

    ___2___ Neither of the two

7. Having a job with excitement and variety.

____1____ Collectivistic   ___0___ Individualistic

____2____ Neither of the two

9. Having a job that does not disrupt your family life.

____0____ Collectivistic   ___1___ Individualistic

____2____ Neither of the two

17. Having opportunities to get ahead in your professional career.

____0____ Collectivistic   ___1___ Individualistic

____2____ Neither of the two

18. Having a job that has good prospects for the future with your employer.

____0____ Collectivistic   ___1___ Individualistic

____2____ Neither of the two

19. Having a job that makes your organization different in some ways because you work for it.

____1____ Collectivistic   ___1___ Individualistic

____1____ Neither of the two

20. Having the security of a fairly permanent job.

____0____ Collectivistic   ___1___ Individualistic

____2____ Neither of the two

24. Having a good salary.

____0____ Collectivistic   ___0___ Individualistic

____3____ Neither of the two

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Appendix

INSTRUCTIONS

On the following pages are 24 job-related characteristics which will be used in my graduate research project for a proposed study.

Please read the sociological Explanations and Definitions of individualism and collectivism (see below). Using these explanations as guides, indicate on the attched form if each job-related characteristics is:

        1) Collectivistic
        2) Individualistic
        3) Neither of the two

Please mark <u>only</u> <u>one</u> answer for each job characteristic. If you have questions, please call me at 273-2761 or 277-3133. Thank you, Steve Jones.

EXPLANATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

The collectivistic culture stresses that the group takes precedence over the individual. The collectivist believes the interest of the many outweigh the interest of one.

The individualistic culture emphasizes the individual; people whose guiding thoughts are in their individual best interests. The individualistic person values not only the rights of the individual, but also the right to be left free by society.

<u>Collectivists...</u>
    Emphasize the consequences for the group.
    Maintain social relationships through loaning, borrowing, and giving.
    Are likely to be influenced and will conform.
    Are concerned with the approval of others.
    Believe one´s actions may harm or help the group.
    Share the outcomes of others and believe they are involved in the lives of others.

<u>Individualists...</u>
    Emphasize the self.
    Are self-sufficient, independent, and have personal items.
    Are not as likely to be influenced and are not as likely to conform.
    Are less motiviated by shame or guilt and are more answerable to the self.
    Are not affected by others and believe their actions do not affect others.
    Involve themselves in the lives of few others.

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    Collectivism: A Study of Cross-Cultural Researchers.
    Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 17, 229-231.
Gudykunst, W. B., Yoon, Y., Nishida, T. (1987). The
    Influence of Individualism-Collectivism on Perceptions
    of Communication in ingroup and outgroup relationships.
    Communication Monographs, 54, 295-306.

QUESTIONNAIRE
Please choose only one answer

1. Having opportunities to learn new skills and knowledge.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

2. Having the opportunity to get ahead in the organization
    for which you work.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

3. Having a job that is valuable and essential to the
    community.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

4. Having a job that brings you into contact with people.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

5. Having the support of co-workers.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

6. Having a job in a well-known and respected business or organization, etc.

   _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

   _____ Neither of the two

7. Having a job with excitement and variety.

   _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

   _____ Neither of the two

8. Having respect for the ability and competence of co-workers.

   _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

   _____ Neither of the two

9. Having a job that does not disrupt your family life.

   _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

   _____ Neither of the two

10. Having a job that presents opportunities to influence public thinking.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

11. Having full use of your abilities and training.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

12. Having a job with prestige in the community.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

13. Having a job your family is proud of.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

14. Having a job in which you enjoy what's involved in it.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

15. Having recognition from superiors in your organization.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

16. Having opportunities for self initiative, originality, and self expression.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

17. Having opportunities to get ahead in your professional career.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

18. Having a job that has good prospects for the future with your employer.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

19. Having a job that makes your organization different in some ways because you work for it.

    _____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

    _____ Neither of the two

20. Having the security of a fairly permanent job.

_____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

_____ Neither of the two

21. Having the opportunity of being with people who are congenial and easy to work with.

_____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

_____ Neither of the two

22. Having a job in which you are left alone to work without continual close supervision.

_____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

_____ Neither of the two

23. Having a job in which there is ample opportunity to influence management's decision.

_____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

_____ Neither of the two

24. Having a good salary.

_____ Collectivistic   _____ Individualistic

_____ Neither of the two

THANK YOU!