

The meaning and practice of professional government communication compared across disciplinary fields and between countries

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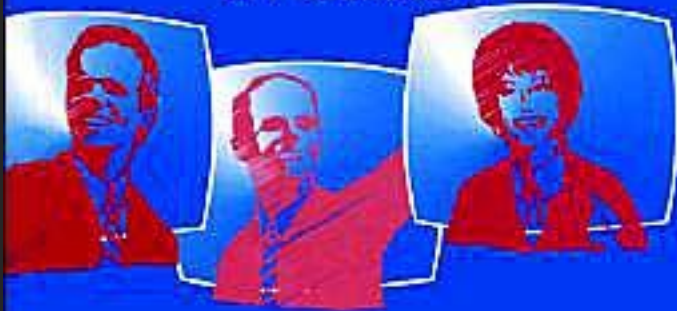
GOVERNMENT CASES AND CHALLENGES COMMUNICATION

Edited by Karen Sandberg and Maria José Ceval



POLITICAL ADVERTISING IN WESTERN DEMOCRACIES

Parties & Candidates
on Television



Edited by
Lynda Lee Kaid & Christina Holtz-Bacha

Global Political Campaigning

A Worldwide Analysis of
Campaign Professionals
and Their Practices

Pritz Plasser
with Gunda Plasser

Political communication:
Professionalism=use of experts to
achieve strategic and tactical power



OK Now wave to the reporters so they know you know they are there, thats right.



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E X C E L L E N C E
— in —
P U B L I C R E L A T I O N S
— and —
C O M M U N I C A T I O N
M A N A G E M E N T

Edited by

— **JAMES E. GRUNIG** —

Public Relations

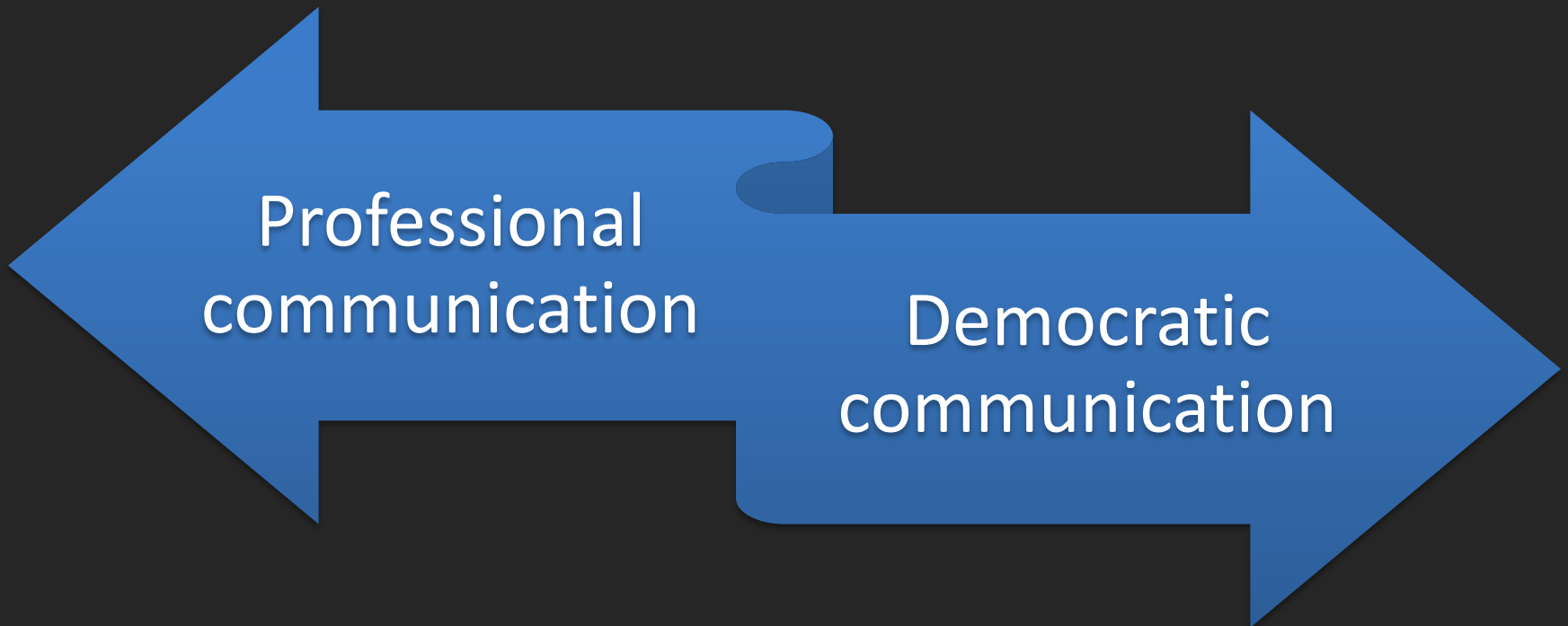
Professionalism=Competences and standards



Comparing across fields

	Political Communication	Public Relations
Subject matter	Campaigns Media/political systems Advertising	Competences Practice Media transparency and PR professionals
Focus	Power Normative effects Structures and systems	Effective practice Standards Communities of practice Organizational identity and legitimacy

False dichotomy



AXES FOR ANALYSING GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION

TACTICAL



STRATEGIC

PARTY
CENTRED



CITIZEN
CENTRED

Tactics to strategy

Thinking strategically

- Journalists' profiles and training
- Media relations
- News releases
- Speech writing
- Press conferences

- Varied communication specialisms
- Communication plans
- Stakeholder maps
- Reputation management
- Communication assessment

Structures, processes and rules

Citizen/civic values in government communication

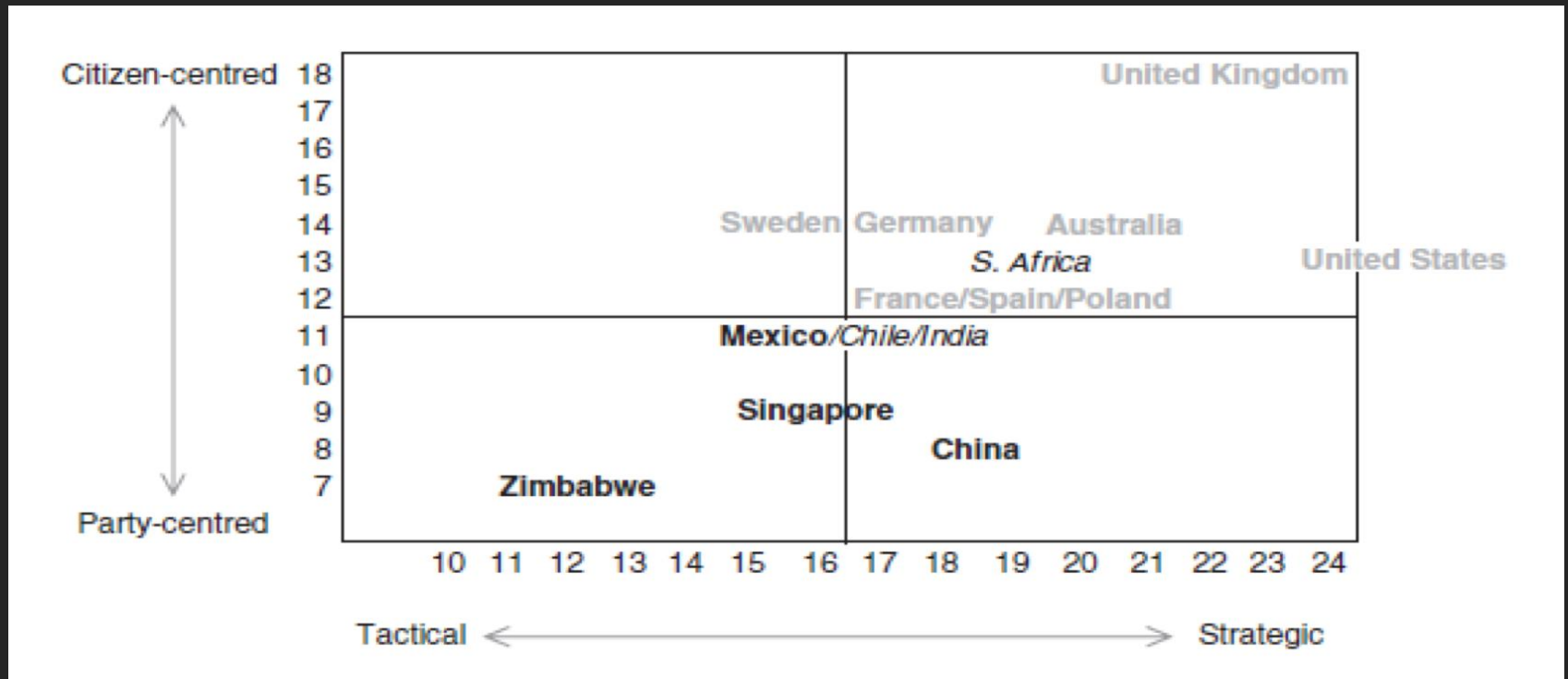
Communication values: indicators of rules and processes encouraging the values of **non-partisanship, transparency and participation** in government communication.

PARTY
CENTRED



CITIZEN
CENTRED

Categorization of government communication



Selection of countries

Group 1: United Kingdom and United States: the 'Anglo' group.

Group 2: Germany, France, Spain and Poland: the 'Europe' group.

Analysis: institutional register of government communication practice

- **Organizational charts:** specialization in the distribution of areas and the institutional weight given to communication;
- Legislation, policies and conventions regarding government communication **functions and tasks;**
- **Codified standards** regarding (non) partisanship, neutrality, impartiality and other values.

Organizational structure



✓ Organizational distinction between planning and implementation

✓ Fixed and defined position for the chief executive spokesperson (no politician) and has a high rank in the organizational chart.

✓ Other criteria for distribution of units: geography/type of media

✓ Less fixed and defined position of the spokesperson (politician)



A 'community of practice': how tasks are defined



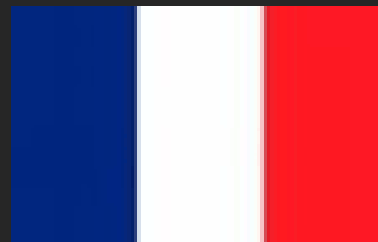
- ✓UK: building relationships, openness
- ✓USA: Office of Public Engagement

- ✓Tactical tasks: gathering information for press briefings, scheduling media encounters, conducting briefings, preparing for press conferences and putting together news clippings and press communiqués.
- ✓No reference to the need of interaction



Non-partisanship, neutrality and values

- ✓ Extensive regulation for ensuring non-partisan outside election periods
- ✓ UK: normative aspects of government comm, extensive policy guidance; specific corps of civil servants



- ✓ Regulation limited to specific issues eg. Campaigns
- ✓ Little has developed regarding government messages in between election campaigns.
- ✓ No specific corps of civil servants; little formulation of values

Transparency: documented commitment and evidence

✓ Extensive evidence



✓ Some evidence



Conclusions

Fruitful crossfields comparisons; different emphasis

- Political communication-systems and power
 - The dark side of professionalization
- Public relations-practice, values and occupational legitimacy.
 - Ethical values bounded to effective communication

United Kingdom;

Most citizen centred and strategic capacity

Germany:

Strong citizen focus and intermediate strategic capacity

US

Strong strategic focus
Medium citizen centred

France, Spain, Poland:

Intermediate citizen focus and strategic capacity

- Stronger institutionalized values and with higher strategic capacity
- Government communication was institutionally oriented towards a civic purpose, understood as the public good and distinguishable from a purely political purpose.

- Values more weakly institutionalized, government communication was less clearly differentiated from partisan government communication
- Lower strategic capacity

Civic purpose

Political communication research has directed our attention to the development of strategic capacity; public relations research has emphasized the importance of civic purposes but underplays the way in which unequal strategic capacities undermine their attainment.

Professional government communication

- Strategic, coordinated
- Efficient, effective
- Defined values



Performance and values: necessary partnership

Challenges for future research

- Better data sets
- Agree measures for efficient/effective government communication
- Agree on inward looking and outward facing civic/democratic dimensions

Thanks for listening

Obrigadas pela sua atenção

Gracias por su atención