

PRSA 2011 International Conference  
Orlando, Fla., Oct. 15 through 18, 2011  
Media Non-Transparency: How It Affects Your Story  
PRSA 2011 International Conference Workshop  
4:45 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 16, Palazzo Salon G

*Panel Participants:*

*Robert Grupp, APR, President, Grupp Global Partners*

*Dean Kruckeberg, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA, Professor, University of North Carolina-Charlotte*

*Katerina Tsetsura, Ph.D., University of Oklahoma*

For questions and additional information, please contact Dr. Tsetsura at [tsetsura@ou.edu](mailto:tsetsura@ou.edu)

### Workshop Summary

The research project on media non-transparency has been supported by the Institute for Public Relations, PRSA, IPRA, IPI and IFJ. This workshop shares some of the most interesting and significant results of the media non-transparency studies that have been conducted throughout the world during the past 10 years. Drs. Tsetsura and Kruckeberg are presenting the highlights of this research project that is the basis for their forthcoming book, "Transparency, Public Relations and the Mass Media: Combating Media Bribery Worldwide" (scheduled for publication by Taylor & Francis-Routledge in 2012). They are offering a conceptual understanding and are highlighting the practical implications of global media non-transparency and how this non-transparency affects the practice of public relations throughout the world. As a global practitioner with many years of experience, Mr. Grupp provides highly valuable insights into the media non-transparency practices from the "ground zero" perspective by sharing his practitioner's perspective on the dangers of ignoring or misinterpreting this practice of non-transparency. Case studies and examples from around the world, including the USA, China, Hong Kong, Poland, Russia, UAE and Ukraine are described.

The most widespread forms of media influences, according to the 2007 global study of media practitioners (Tsetsura, 2008), are: 1) direct payments for publicity; 2) indirect influences; 3) pressure from advertising departments; and 4) financial pressures.

Here are some previous and current studies (please contact Dr. Tsetsura for more information):

Klyueva, A., & Tsetsura, K. (2010). Media non-transparency research: A Case of Romania. *Public Relations Journal*, 4(4). Retrieved from <http://www.prsa.org/Intelligence/PRJournal/Documents/2010FallKlyuevaTsetsura.pdf>

Tsetsura, K., & Grynko, A. (2009). An exploratory study of the media transparency in Ukraine. *Public Relations Journal*, 3(2). Retrieved from [http://www.prsa.org/SearchResults/download/6D-030205/0/An\\_Exploratory\\_Study\\_of\\_the\\_Media\\_Transparency\\_in](http://www.prsa.org/SearchResults/download/6D-030205/0/An_Exploratory_Study_of_the_Media_Transparency_in)

Tsetsura, K. (2008). An exploratory study of global media relations practices. *Institute for Public Relations Research Reports: International Research*. Retrieved from [http://www.instituteforpr.org/research\\_single/an\\_exploratory\\_study\\_of\\_global\\_media\\_relations\\_practices/](http://www.instituteforpr.org/research_single/an_exploratory_study_of_global_media_relations_practices/)

Tsetsura, K. (2005). Bribery for news coverage: Research in Poland. *Institute for Public Relations Online: International Research*. Retrieved from [http://www.instituteforpr.org/research\\_single/bribery\\_for\\_news/](http://www.instituteforpr.org/research_single/bribery_for_news/)

Kruckeberg, D., & Tsetsura, K. (2003). International index of bribery for news coverage: A composite index by country of variables related to the likelihood of the existence of "cash for news coverage." *Institute for Public Relations Online: International Research*. Retrieve from [http://www.instituteforpr.com/international.phtml?article\\_id=bribery\\_index](http://www.instituteforpr.com/international.phtml?article_id=bribery_index)

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Hands-on Activities: Media Non-transparency Workshop

Hands-on Activity 1

Getting Publicity Coverage in Russia

You are a public relations practitioner for a major home-goods company. You have just arrived in Moscow to help the company explore the lucrative Russian market. One of your goals is to spread the word among multiple publics about the fact that your company will soon open a store in Moscow. You have high-quality newsworthy information and solid publicity materials (news releases, multi-media kits, etc.). You have contacted major newspapers and TV channels in Moscow, but so far most of them have told you that you will have to go through their advertising departments to agree on how much your company would pay for publication of your news. It seems that no one wants to publish this information just because it is newsworthy and relevant to local readers and viewers. What would you do?

OPTIONAL INFO: Some additional information might be helpful

You have never before paid for publicity. You know that professional codes of ethics for journalists and for public relations practitioners in Russia prohibit bribing the media to get coverage.

You know that journalists who work for major national newspapers in Moscow have good, but not great, salaries.

You have checked with a friend who is a local journalist, and she has told you that your information is well-written and newsworthy, but she nevertheless is unsure whether her editor will approve publication of this news about your company.

From your previous conversations with editors, you know that they are cautious about publishing positive company news because they say the Russian anti-monopoly committee is always asking them whether they have published any positive company news as a hidden advertisement (meaning that the company had paid the newspaper for publication of this news—but did not indicate that this was advertising material).

Some have suggested that you contact their advertising departments to see whether the newspaper can benefit somehow from publishing this news: the advertising revenue is going down in the newspapers, so it is always a good idea to get some extra money from the companies, they say.

What would you do?

Hands-on Activity 2

Blackmailing in Southern China

You are the Senior Communication Manager/VP, China and South-East Asia Region, of a major transnational corporation that is headquartered in Shanghai. Today, you got a call from a local journalist in Southern China who is a staff reporter for a local newspaper. The journalist said that he wrote, as he put it, an investigative story uncovering the “absolutely shocking” truth about your company’s policies in China. He sent you a copy of the written report, saying, “I plan to publish this report in our newspaper next week. If you do not want this material to appear, we need to meet for lunch to discuss a payment that you can offer me for not publishing this story.” The report accuses your company of unethical practices that you know for certain are absolutely false. Publication of this material can potentially hurt your company’s reputation as the newspaper, although local, has a wide outreach in Southern China).

What would you do?