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# Crisis Comm & Media Relations Newsletter

October 1, 2014

Now in our 12th Year of Publication

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## A League Deflated: How Recent Controversies and PR Mishaps Have Altered the NFL's Image

Barbara Paynter has a simple message for organizations that are involved in public relations quagmires. "Tell the truth. Tell it all," said Paynter, a partner at Hennes Paynter Communications in Cleveland. "If you have done something wrong, admit it and figure out how to fix it." Paynter believes the NFL has made plenty of mistakes with its handling of the domestic violence case involving Baltimore Ravens running back Ray Rice, and the subsequent controversy stemming from child abuse charges leveled against Minnesota Vikings star Adrian Peterson. Now, with the National Organization for Women calling for NFL commissioner Roger Goodell to resign and the league undergoing possibly the most tumultuous period in its history, the most powerful organization in professional sports has one of the worst types of controversies on its hands. The NFL has "a credibility problem," Paynter said, "and it starts with Goodell."

[Read more here...](#)



## The NFL Hits Just Keep A-Comin'

[This Photoshopped CoverGirl Ad Is The Most Powerful Protest Against The NFL We've Seen](#) *Business Insider*

A Photoshopped NFL CoverGirl ad is circulating the web following the recent domestic abuse scandal involving Baltimore Ravens running back

Ray Rice.



## Hubris, American Politics & the Media Today

[How Gary Hart's Downfall Forever Changed American Politics](#) *New York Times*

As anyone alive during the 1980s knows, Hart, the first serious presidential contender of the 1960s generation, was taken down and eternally humiliated by a scandal, a suspected affair with a beautiful blonde whose name, Donna Rice, had entered the cultural lexicon, along with the yacht - Monkey Business - near which she had been photographed on his lap. The Hart episode is almost universally remembered as a tale of classic hubris.

A Kennedy-like figure on a fast track to the presidency defies the media to find anything nonexemplary in his personal life, even as he carries on an affair with a woman half his age and poses for pictures with her, and naturally he gets caught and humiliated. How could he not have known this would happen? How could such a smart guy have been that stupid ?

*Photo Credit: Ian Allen for The New York Times*



## The Reviews are In

[How Should Business Owners Respond To A Negative Online Review?](#) *Consumerist*

We know that the proper response of a business to a bad online review shouldn't be to post their own fake positive ones, or to fine wedding hosts for the bad reviews by their invited guests. Yet what should the proper response be when someone expresses dissatisfaction with your business...or when you take over a business with a history of bad reviews?



## Important If True

[Rumors: Information is the Antidote](#) *Peter Sandman*

In your life experience, how often have rumors turned out to have at least a germ of truth? One-fifth of the time? One-third the time? More than that? Odds are you have learned neither to trust the rumor mill nor to ignore it. If the content of a particular rumor matters to you, if it's "important if true," you try to check it out. And if you can neither confirm nor disconfirm it, you may well take some preliminary action based on the possibility that the rumor could turn out accurate.



## Civic Leadership Institute

For our friends in Northeastern Ohio, the Civic Leadership Institute is a compact civic education and awareness program that will let you meet and interact with the people directly involved in our civic infrastructure at the highest level. This program is for anyone interested in learning more about the how and why of Cleveland's renaissance. From the return of LeBron James to the recent news that Cleveland will be site of the Republican National Convention in 2016, you'll meet many of the area's opinion and news makers. This program is great for people new to the area, longtime residents who want to be more engaged, young professionals looking to build their civic education, or life-long learners who want an update on how to stay engaged. For more information about the six once-a-week sessions, each an hour and a half, click [here](#).



## Not a Great Time to be Called 'Isis'

[Some Organizations Flee From the Name 'Isis'](#) *Ragan's PRDaily*

There are few names as reviled as ISIS in the Western world today. The group, also known as the Islamic State or ISIL, has extended a path of terror through the Middle East. In response, organizations that share the name 'Isis' are now distancing themselves from the name, in some cases changing it altogether.



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### Tick, Tick, Tick

[Riccie Johnson, Making '60 Minutes' Look Good Since 1968](#) *TVNewser*  
You may not know her name, but you do know her work. Johnson has been with '60 Minutes' since the beginning, as make-up artist for the correspondents and their high-profile guests.



### Obsession With Style Over Substance

[Female Newscasters Deserve Much Better Than 'Window Dressing' Status](#) *Crain's Cleveland Business*

Here in our country, despite efforts to celebrate "girl power" and encourage them to study science and mathematics, the message that being "pretty, young and thin" seems to always trump "smart and accomplished." Girls and women are saturated with images of cartoon princesses with tiny waists and luxurious hair, Photoshopped magazine models and celebrities who must meet the litmus test of physical beauty as well as talent in order to be successful.



## Short Takes

[William Shatner Croons 'Bohemian Rhapsody' in Spellbinding British Travel Ad](#) *AdWeek*

[Storytelling Lessons from Budweiser Puppy Commercial](#) *Poynter*

[This Month in Media History: Edward R. Murrow Describes the Bombing of London in 1940](#) *Poynter*

[This Short Video Will Remind You Why You Love the Movies](#) *No Film School*



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### Upcoming Events & Seminars

We often do presentations about crisis communications for industry trade groups, law firms, bar associations, hospital, education and other professional associations. Often, those events are open to the public or for a fee payable to the sponsoring organization. For more information, please contact us.

10/3/14 Ohio School Boards Association  
10/6/14 Ohio Association of Independent Schools  
10/8/14 Ohio State Bar Association - Corp. Counsel Institute  
12/8/14 Columbus Bar Association  
2/15/14 Toledo Bar Association

12/16/14 Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association  
12/17/14 Akron Bar Association  
3/13/15 American Bar Association Leadership Conference  
4/2/15 Ohio Safety Congress



### Need a Presenter for Your Next Meeting or Conference?

Are you looking for an eye-opening, inspiring presentation for your next event? If your organization, company or association is searching for something different - a content-packed, entertaining, how-to customized seminar on crisis communications, reputation management or how to manage the media - then we should talk. Don't just take our word for it -

see [where we've talked before](#) and [what other people say](#) about our seminars.



### Managing the Media: Lawyers & The Press CLE

As almost any general counsel of a large, publicly traded, consumer-oriented company will tell you, legal controversies today are tried in the Court of Public Opinion -- at least as much as in any Court of Law. Every organization, especially large, publicly-traded corporations, has much to gain (or lose) by the way a legal controversy is positioned in the media. Because the value of a company's reputation is immeasurable -- and perhaps its largest uninsured asset -- a corporation loses when the brand image is tarnished, even if the corporation technically wins at trial. Furthermore, since most legal controversies are settled prior to trial, the Court of Public Opinion has arguably become the most important battleground affecting not only good will and market share, but legal bargaining power and settlement negotiations. Managing this battleground, therefore, has become integral to many corporations' legal strategies.

**Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics, Vol. 22, 2009**

For more information about presentations and training for attorneys and their clients, please [click here](#).



### Crisis/Media Training & Coaching

**Your organization is in trouble...your CFO has been arrested...the company truck was in an accident...hackers hijacked your database...the pressure is on...the camera crew is at the door....**

Do you know how to handle a high-pressure TV interview? Will your messages survive the editing booth? Do you know where to put your hands? What to wear? Do you look at the camera - or at the interviewer?

It takes a lifetime to build a reputation and only a few seconds to destroy one. In a split second you could find yourself in a position where you need to know how to handle the media or be a public spokesperson. Would you know what to do or how to respond?

More important - do you have the necessary skill set to "manage the message" and advance the cause of your business, agency or nonprofit?

You can be certain the senior executives at virtually all of the Fortune 500 companies have been through media training, working with a media coach to learn how to handle adversarial situations with journalists and stakeholders. Perhaps it's time for you to learn this specialized set of survival skills?



We also offer spokesperson & presentation training and coaching, designed to improve your daily interactions with colleagues, employees, investors, journalists and other outside parties.

Call Bruce Hennes, Barb Paynter and the staff at [Hennes Paynter Communications](#) today at 216-321-7774 and talk to us about media, spokesperson and presentation training and coaching for you, your top execs -- or anyone who might have to hold the fort down with a reporter until

the appropriate spokesperson can be located. For more about our training services, click [here](#).

Ask us, too, about how we can help you create, implement and test a crisis communications plan. For more information about those services, click [here](#).



**When your organization or reputation is threatened, you need a specialist.  
A crisis communications specialist.**



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**OUR FAVORITE QUOTE:** You simply can't communicate your way out of a situation you've behaved your way into (credit to Don Etling at Fleishman-Hillard for this insight).

**WARREN BUFFET'S 4-STEP CRISIS COMM STRATEGY:** Get it right. Get it fast. Get it out. Get it over.



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