

Addendum to Chapter 10 by Kevin Kosar

Cases in Chapter and Contextual Items

1. Occupation: Social Security Administration Promoting Private Accounts

Items: Social Security Administration, *Understanding the Benefits* (Washington: SSA, 2010), at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10024.pdf>; and Government Accountability Office, *Social Security: Costs Associated with the Administration's Efforts to Promote Program Reforms*, GAO-07-621R (Washington: GAO, August 10, 2007), at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d07621r.pdf>.

2. Agency: DoD Selling the Iraq War

Items: U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, *Misleading Information from the Battlefield: The Tillman and Lynch Episodes*, hearing, 110th Cong., 2nd sess., H. Rept. 110-858,, September 16, 2008, at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-110hrpt858/pdf/CRPT-110hrpt858.pdf>; and Government Accountability Office, *Department of Defense—Retired Military Officers as Media Analysts*, B-316443 (Washington: GAO, July 21, 2003), at <http://www.gao.gov/decisions/appro/316443.pdf>.

3. Legal: Medicare Promotion

Items: Democratic Policy Committee, *An Oversight Hearing on the Bush Administration's Plans to Privatize Social Security* (January 28, 2005), at <http://dpc.senate.gov/hearings/hearing18/transcript.pdf>; and Government Accountability Office, *Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services—Video News Releases*, B-302710 (Washington: GAO, May 19, 2004), at <http://www.gao.gov/decisions/appro/302710.pdf>.

4. Constitutional: Obama's School Speech

Items: Department of Education, *The Federal Role in Education* (webpage), at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/fed/role.html>; and Kevin R. Kosar, *Higher Education Standards: We'd Love to But...* (Philadelphia, PA: Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 27-31, 2003), at http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1b/51/85.pdf.

5. Sacred: The Jet Photo-Op

Items: White House, "Press Briefing: By Press Secretary Robert Gibbs," April 28, 2009, at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Briefing-by-White-House-Press-Secretary-Robert-Gibbs-4-28-09; and White House Counsel's Office, "Internal Review Concerning April 27, 2009 Air Force Flight," memorandum, May 5, 2009, at http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Report_by_President.pdf; and.

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Cases in Chapter and Vignettes

1. Occupation: Social Security Administration Promoting Private Accounts

Regardless of political party, there is widespread recognition that the Social Security program faces long-term financing challenges. There are a variety of approaches to approaching this policy problem, and some are better than others. How might an agency express its expertise-based views on reforms without being perceived as pushing an agenda?

2. Agency: DoD Selling the Iraq War

In most modern nation-states, military agencies report to elected officials, who usually have very divergent views on where and when to employ military force. When should a military agency weigh in on these debates? How can it communicate its views without being perceived as favoring certain elected officials over others?

3. Legal: Medicare Promotion

When a government creates a new program, it is obliged to explain the program to the public, and especially to those persons who are eligible to participate in the program. How does the Medicare promotional campaign example relate to the purported politics vs. administration dichotomy?

4. Constitutional: Obama's School Speech

Most governments have programs that provide benefits for children. Yet, children are children. Where does the line lie between promoting children's programs and using children as political props?

5. Sacred: The Jet Photo-Op

As the New York City jet flyover example illustrates, the public often responds harshly when a government agency offends the public's sense of the sacred. When an agency makes this sort of mistake, what steps should it take to respond to the outcry? This book's CD ROM includes a transcript of Press Secretary Robert Gibbs' response to tough questioning on the flyover. How well did he do?

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Expanded Checklist

To do right and avoid wrong, the government public relations practitioner should consider the following contexts before acting:

___Position:

1. Are you a civil servant or political appointee?
2. How does the public perceive your role as a government communicator? For example, are you expected to serve the public or to serve the agency?
3. In your position, are you expected to speak frankly on agency-related matters? Or are you expected to be cautious about releasing information?

___Agency

1. Does the public expect your agency expected to engage in public relations activities?
2. In thinking about the perceptions of your agency and its communications, what activities has it taken historically? Has it changed its public relations work in recent years?
3. Does your agency's nature oblige it to communicate with the public? If the answer is yes, for what purpose(s)?
4. What are your agency's policies or rules concerning employee information with the public? For example, may an employee speak freely with reporters? Must an employee's communications with elected officials be reviewed by the agency's leadership beforehand?

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___Legal

1. Do any statutes authorize or direct your agency to communicate to the public? If the answer is yes, for what purpose(s)?
2. Does your nation have appropriation laws or other forms of legal authorities that affect the authority of government agencies to communicate with the public?
3. What laws affect the ability of your agency's employees to speak on agency-related matters?

___Constitutional

1. What basic ideas and principles does your nation's constitution hold?
2. How does your nation's constitution conceive the relationship of the public to the government?

___Sacred

1. What aspects (dates, events, ideas, items, persons, places) of your nation's history are especially treasured by the public?
2. What are your nation's national narratives? (E.g., a movement toward equality among races, an expansion of opportunity)?