

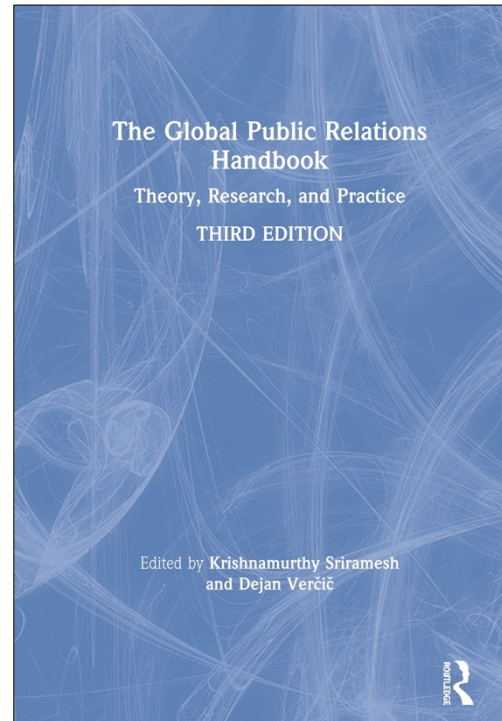
Krishnamurthy Sriramesh and Dejan Verčič (Eds.), **The Global Public Relations Handbook: Theory, Research, and Practice** (3rd ed.), New York, NY: Routledge, 2019, 366 pp., \$80.95 (eBook), \$89.95 (paperback), \$250.00 (hardback).

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If in previous years the backlash against globalization had become the forefront of significant political rhetoric and decision making around the world, the year 2020 has brought to light the dire need to foster crosscultural collaborations to address paramount issues, including a global pandemic, inequality, racism, terrorism, the intrusion of social media, and the public's distrust in traditional media outlets, among others. Despite its paramount importance, the field of global public relations is still in development. The majority of its theories were developed in the United States and applied to international practice despite cultural incongruity. **The Global Public Relations Handbook: Theory, Research, and Practice**, edited by Krishnamurthy Sriramesh and Dejan Verčič, addresses the ethnocentricity of the field, and highlights the contribution of the discipline to society.

In its third edition, the book represents the first volume to introduce state-of-the-art essays that emphasize the need to recognize the "multicultural environment" for the practice of global public relations and to focus on the influence that the political system, economic system, societal and organizational culture, the media system, and activism exert on public relations practice. Moreover, the volume addresses gender inequality in public relations, not only by discussing the topic across multiple chapters, but also by giving direct voice to women practitioners and scholars who contributed extensively to this edition.

The book is edited by the two leading scholars of global public relations in the world, namely Krishnamurthy Sriramesh and Dejan Verčič. Krishnamurthy Sriramesh is a professor of public relations and the director of the Master of Corporate Communication Program at University of Colorado, Boulder. He has co-edited several books, published over 90 journal articles, and authored over 100 conference papers. Dejan Verčič is a professor of communication and the head of the Centre for Marketing and Public Relations at the University of Ljubljana. He has published 15 books and numerous research articles and conference papers that he has presented across the world. This book incorporates contributions from accomplished scholars and practitioners and has already been awarded the prestigious PRIDE award from the PR Division of the National Communication Association. It constitutes a perfect blend of theory, research, and practice and its contributors hail from both academia and the industry, where they currently practice global public relations or have held key decision-making positions. Authors include Barbora Maronkova, the head of the NATO's communication team based in



Kiev, Ukraine, Thomas Stoeckle, former corporate communication manager at Lexis-Nexis, and Margery Kraus, executive chairperson of APCO Worldwide, among others. The book successfully bridges the gap between academic research and practice and is likely to lead to an increased academic focus on the development of applied research.

For the first time, this edition focuses on key global PR players, among which include global PR associations and agencies, governments and the public sector, NATO, the EU (European Union), family-owned enterprises, global PR by terrorist groups, global PR of nonformal activist organizations, and failed states.

Readers will find the content intriguing, as the book introduces topics that have seldom been researched before. Digital technology, the interdisciplinary nature of the public relations field, and the need to reduce ethnocentricity represent major themes that permeate the content. Undoubtedly, public relations cannot succeed in effectively contributing to the society without drawing from disciplines such as sociology, economics, anthropology, and political science. *The Global Public Relations Handbook* sheds light on the importance of economics for the field, as it discusses issues that range from crowdfunding, which fosters economic egalitarianism, to the negative impact of unethical public relations on the economy when practitioners promote unworthy products and services. The understanding of how anthropology informs our field is evident in chapters dedicated to environmental activism in South Dakota and family-owned businesses in Asia. For example, in chapter 24, Judy Motion (UNSW Sydney) discusses The Standing Rock campaign in the United States and draws on the notion of personhood that could be used for environmental causes. She gives the examples of the Whanganui River in Australia and the Ganges River in India, both of which are defined as living entities, and therefore enjoy legal protection. Further, in chapter 14, Ganga S. Dhanesh (Zayed University) and Flora Hung-Baesecke (Massey University) shed light on the culture of family-owned businesses, including Samsung (South Korea) and Tata Motors (India), and their global impact on national building through job creation and economic recovery. The book dedicates several chapters to public diplomacy, government communication, and the PR efforts of NATO and the EU, making it irrefutably clear that PR students need to be well-versed in political science. For example, Chiara Valentini's (University of Jyväskylä) chapter 11 sheds light on the transition efforts from information giving to engagement within the political and social contexts of the EU.

The Global Public Relations Handbook tackles topics that need greater understanding in today's public relations practices. Readers will greatly benefit by learning about the hacktivist group Anonymous and the reversed PR practices of failed states, as Zimbabwe and North Korea foster negative stakeholder relationship and engage in "activism" against their own citizens. Similarly intriguing is the notion of the "nations within nations," a term coined by Jordi Xifra and Krishnamurthy Sriramesh to refer to discrete cultural groups that view themselves as a nation, yet live within the borders of a different country (chapter 23). Finally, the new "systemic norm" of character assassination is discussed by Sergei A. Samoilenko from the perspective of the systems theory (chapter 25).

Since its first edition, *The Global Public Relations Handbook* has represented the cornerstone of public relations theory and practice. Its aim to reduce ethnocentricity in global public relations scholarship and practice has been accomplished through detailed and thorough analyses, along with specific directions for future research. Digital communication is likely to continue to break down cultural barriers, as evident in Takashi Inoue's chapter 13 article that tackles corporate public relations in the era of hyperglobalization. It is likely that,

in the future, social networking sites will drastically blur sociocultural differences when it comes to social movements, brands, and politicians. It would be interesting to potentially see the next edition of the book additionally discuss the social construction of brands and global issues from the perspective of the culture that online users form as they connect around common interests. Specifically, the book could investigate if global social movements that gain momentum online (such as the #metoo movement) render cultural differences less relevant as online users form their own online communities and co-create their own cybercultures.

In addition, since the book's publication in 2019, the corporate world has been facing increased pressure to address societal inequity and display cultural sensitivity in their products, services, and operations. Numerous multinational conglomerates, among which include Dolce & Gabbana, Gucci, and Christian Dior, faced serious scandals with respect to perceptions of racism and cultural appropriation related to their ads and products. The field of public relations has yet to shed light on how corporations can prevent or address scandals related to moral outrage, particularly related to how these affect organizational operations across various cultural milieus. It would constitute a riveting and paramount topic to tackle in the fourth edition of *The Global Public Relations Handbook*.

Global public relations scholars, practitioners, and students will greatly benefit from the informative and riveting third edition of the book, as our role to make a difference has become even more paramount than before. As Richard Edelman, president and CEO of Edelman, argued in the preface, the book represents an "indispensable guide to helping build a more secure, more knowledgeable, and more trusting world."