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**Economic Rationalism:
Celebrity Placement in Women's Magazines**

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Abstract

This study re-examines Gandy's information subsidy in a contemporary magazine framework by exploring how subsidies are used to negotiate celebrity placement in women's magazines. The research utilizes in-depth interviews with six of the industry's most powerful magazine celebrity bookers. Findings suggest that editors exhibit self-monitoring qualities during subsidy discussions, particularly in relation to trust, flexibility, and mutual reliance. The additional analysis illustrates the economic rationalism of a rapidly evolving celebrity industrial complex increasingly augmented by women's magazine content. In addition, it adds another layer to Gandy's original scholarship that encompasses the complex new media landscape.

Introduction: Balancing Well-Knownness

Forty years ago, Boorstin (1963) wrote that a celebrity "is a person who is known for his well-knownness." This often-quoted definition is simple, but seemingly succinct. The commercial nature and profit-centered news work of modern media such as television, the Internet, movies, radio/recordings, and high-speed printing presses have accelerated this "well-knownness" to the point where the famous have become the ubiquitous. Their images, voices, and personal information can be found everywhere from the front of a cereal box to the cover of *The New York Times* magazine. Hence, Boorstin's observation that "the celebrity therefore is the perfect embodiment of tautology: the most familiar is the most familiar," certainly rings true in the early 21st century.

Much of a contemporary celebrity's "well-knownness" can also be attributed to the careful guidance of a celebrity publicist, who must calculate how to balance his/her client's media coverage with the public's appetite for the celebrity (Snyder, 2003). Many publicists believe that too much coverage of a celebrity might lead to public boredom, while too little coverage could cause public forgetfulness (Snyder, 2003).

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The current research acknowledges and expands on this equilibrium of media attention and public interest by attending to the *process* of celebrity booking at mainstream women's magazines as viewed from the booker's perspective. The purpose of this research is to intersect several theoretical frameworks to locate the role of magazine booker (the journalist) during negotiations for celebrity sources. In addition, this research asks how do a celebrity booker's duties bridge conventional journalism; what specific characteristics must bookers employ in order to be considered successful at their job, and how might this theoretical lens be applicable within other media industries?

To best understand a magazine celebrity booker's responsibilities, this research considers a re-examination of information subsidies, originally described by Gandy as controlled access to information at little effort or cost to the person getting the information (1982). In this contemporary evolution, it now seems the source (publicist), rather than the journalist (booker), controls the exchange. Negotiation is embedded within this exchange, whereby "negotiators try to dictate or clarify the terms of an exchange of the distribution of resources" (Wall, 1985). Contained within negotiation are self-monitoring skills, or "the observation and adjustment of one's social presence in order to achieve one's goal" (Fredin, 1984, p. 866), a journalist employs with a source in order to meet her objective. This article considers the communication process involved in negotiation and self-monitoring as one of the key determinants in the success or failure of booking a celebrity in contemporary women's magazines.

The complex dynamic between booker and publicist has economic foundations. Newsstand sales in the last 15 years prove that for women's beauty and fashion magazines, celebrity covers, specifically those with movie stars, sell magazines (Kuczynski, 1999). For example, in 1997 top titles *Cosmopolitan* and *Harper's Bazaar* broke from conventional cover trends and featured celebrities Jennifer Aniston and Courtney Love, respectively, instead of models on their covers. These issues were their highest sellers for the year (Kuczynski, 1999).

Since then, the practice of featuring celebrities on women's magazine covers has rapidly expanded and magazine bookers vie for the celebrities that have sold the most magazines at the newsstand. This provides a challenge to a magazine's celebrity booker, because the pool of profitable celebrities is limited. When the magazine's celebrity agenda does not correspond with that of the celebrity publicist, the magazine's editorial production becomes vulnerable (Friend, 2002).

This paper attempts to illustrate for both media professionals and academia how *choosing* a celebrity to feature on a magazine cover and actually *getting* the celebrity on the cover are usually two separate matters. While previous studies (Fairclough, 2008; Muir, 2005; Stockwell, 2004; Winick, 1963) have attended to the prevalence of celebrity coverage and its audience effects, few have examined the creation of the content (Johnson, 2002). In addition, none have utilized this blend of theoretical frameworks to guide its research.

Theoretical Underpinnings: Subsidies, Negotiation and Self-Monitoring

According to Gandy (1982), information subsidy dynamics can be viewed as either social or fundamentally economic. The relationship between journalist (celebrity booker) and source (celebrity publicist) primarily illustrates the latter's subsidy characteristic, and because a limited number of media personalities are the currency being traded, the economic rationalism demonstrated within this relationship has tendencies relatively unique to the magazine medium. If a deal cannot be made, it is likely the magazine will suffer economically. For major women's magazines, a difference in cover subjects could result in millions of dollars in lost or gained newsstand revenue. Therefore, in this context an editor must interact with a publicist in order to obtain a successful celebrity booking.

This often-overlooked working relationship between celebrity publicist and magazine editor can be conceptually located within the intersection of information subsidy, negotiation and self-monitoring tactics. Although this research recognizes that both the publicists and the editors (bookers) play equally active roles in this dynamic and indeed, any fluid relationship involves at least two parties, it focuses primarily on the strategies of the bookers. This research might be considered a step toward understanding the booker/publicist dynamic in its entirety.

Gandy (1982) describes "information subsidy" theory as controlled access to information at little effort or cost to the person getting the information. According to him, public relations practitioners systematically distribute client information to the media to influence their agendas and possibly influence public opinion (Curtin, 1999). Gandy's theory (1982), similar to other economic subsidy theories, states that an information subsidy decreases the price of obtaining or consuming information. By decreasing the price of acquisition, the person who provides the subsidy anticipates a larger likelihood that the subsidy's audience will use more of the supplied information.

Because of the competitive celebrity booking environment, however, the information subsidy's cost is greatly increased rather than decreased. While the editor desires to distribute the proprietary client information, the publicist has an advantage, often resulting in bargaining power to obtain more influence for his/her client. The particular information subsidy thus adopts source dependency, thanks to this reliance on a publicist's access to her client. This relationship is a new application to Gandy's theory, and one that is unique to the current celebrity media environment in America. Indeed, one might regard this communication evolvment as an information tax of sorts, since negotiating for exclusivity now may mean giving up other aspects of editorial control.

According to Putnam and Roloff (1992), negotiation behavior aims to achieve one party's goals while obstacles comprise a perceived obstruction to that goal attainment. The participant initiates adaptable planning means that imagine action sequences projected to create a favorable outcome. This planning includes five dimensions of cognition: expectation (or anticipating how the other negotiator will react to the messages), goal-directed behavior (interaction sequences aimed at explicit ends), values (evaluative measures used to interpret outcomes), feelings (primary emotions such as surprise, anger, happiness), and the degree to

which the negotiators understand or are well known to each other (Putnam & Roloff, 1992). The multidimensional interplay between negotiators thus employs manipulating tactics in order to achieve these means. This research utilizes one of the concepts, self-monitoring, to explore this relationship

Fredin (1984) writes that journalists work within a highly manipulative environment and for that reason they are more easily influenced by their sources than their sources are by them. For this reason, self-monitoring, defined as “the observation and adjustment of one’s social presence in order to achieve one’s goals” (Fredin, 1984), tends to be an acquired trait, which gives the journalists the tools necessary to manage repeated interactions with sources.

A self-monitoring person may adopt the following characteristics: Expressing more or less emotion than she feels or expressing a different emotion; deciding how to behave by listening carefully to others; doesn’t hide her feelings in order to be liked but to achieve her goals; and is manipulative but not cynically or awkwardly so (Fredin, 1984). Self-monitoring is endemic to the negotiation process between celebrity booker and celebrity publicist. In order to obtain the information subsidy (in this case, a celebrity), a booker will enter into negotiations with a publicist and utilize self-monitoring techniques to achieve his or her goal. While the didactic nature of the editor/publicist relationship presupposes that the publicist will also participate in this exchange by lending self-monitoring behavior as well, this construct is generally utilized to examine journalistic information-gathering rather than the mutual behavioral manipulation between parties.

Methodology

This research utilizes in-depth interviews with six female bookers who worked for top-selling women’s magazines *Allure*, *Cosmo*, *Glamour*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Jane*, and *Redbook*, and who have each had at least 15 years of professional relationships with celebrity publicists. This adopts the concept of Cassell and Symon’s (2004) “elite interviewing” sample, where the most prominent, well-informed, and influential individuals in a community or organization are chosen because of their knowledge in a relevant area. Elites aid the research in establishing a holistic view of a group or its relationship to other groups. While certainly an increased number of interviewees might have been gathered, it seems likely their overall feedback would have lacked the historical context and credibility of this elite sample group.

The editors each requested anonymity and are thus identified throughout this research as Editor A, Editor B, Editor C, Editor D, Editor E, and Editor F. This approach gave the editors the freedom to speak about things that might be considered professionally damaging. To further provide an additional level of ambiguity, the generic anonymous terms “Magazine X, Publicist X, Celebrity X, etc.” appear wherever any magazine, publicist, celebrity, et al. is mentioned. Because all the elite sources use the terms “editor” or “booker” interchangeably, this research will adopt the same style.

Interviews with editors A, B, C, and E all took place in February 2005 in their respective New York City workplaces during work hours. Editor D works from her Los

Angeles home and was interviewed via telephone in February 2005. Editor F was interviewed via e-mails in February 2005. While face-to-face interaction (and non-verbal cues) was removed with Editor F, the editor was given the advantage of time to craft her answer. For the rest of the editors, the settings gave them the opportunity to answer questions in their natural environment while allowing them whatever privacy they deemed necessary (for instance, closing their office door).

Interview questions were chronologically organized around each editor's work experience, beginning with her description of earlier jobs and responsibilities and how her career has evolved (see Appendix). This loose order of topics allowed the editor to contextualize her duties and provide illustrations of her work-in-practice. Open-ended ethnographic (in-depth) interviews were advantageous primarily because they allowed the researcher to "control" the questioning, thus permitting the flexibility to examine topics that might warrant different levels of meaning exploration (Cassell & Symon, 2004; Cresswell, 2003). In addition, the unstructured interviews gave the editors the opportunity to provide more detailed information, leading to greater breadth of feedback than other types of qualitative methods (Langer, 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Vital elements of the unstructured interview include assessing the setting, understanding the language and culture of the respondents, deciding on how to present oneself, locating an informant, gaining trust, establishing rapport, and collecting empirical materials (Fontana & Frey, 1994). In this case, the researcher's experience in the magazine industry provided her knowledge to successfully shape and understand this research process. This research involved getting access to a setting or environment, which is sometimes difficult in close-knit media organizations. The researcher was able to do this, having worked in the magazine industry for years and established ties with different media organizations. Her professional experience also equipped her with an understanding of the language and culture of the respondents, which allowed for conversing with the editors without excessive clarification or questioning of elementary procedures. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) call this comprehension of contextual nature of particular referents a "sharedness of meanings" (p. 713).

Fontana and Frey (1994) define deciding on how to present oneself as how the researcher explains him or herself to those they are studying in a way that maximizes communication and trust (a significant factor to the success or failure of the study). Again, the researcher's experience in the industry allowed her subjects to feel she was neither belittling their jobs nor looking for scandalous information with which to personally profit. Lastly, qualitative researchers are encouraged to find an informant who is willing to act as guide. In this case, Editor C agreed to be interviewed first and also help the researcher gain access to other editors, thus acting as gatekeeper for much of this material. Gaining trust, establishing rapport, and collecting materials were all natural byproducts of the essential first three elements.

Because this research utilizes an interpretive paradigm, the concept of trustworthiness must be substituted for the more customary evaluative standard, validity (Bailey, 2007). Embedded (and thus, interdependent) within trustworthiness are concepts of credibility and confirmability (Bailey, 2007). The sample of elite interviewees directly relate to the trustworthiness of this research.

Analysis

Eight thematic elements emerged from the interviews, and these topics have been given their own subheads within this analysis: Booking a “known,” positioning the magazine, editor/publicist longevity, publicist approval, gaining credentials with publicists, negative credentials: the write-around, negotiating with the editor-in-chief, and controlling emotions. These topics are supported by the subjects’ reflexive comments that illustrate how these themes operate within the overall theoretical framework. Although many comments were edited out for space reasons, the comments that appear within each theme best illustrate and support the emergent concepts at work.

Booking a “Known”

It seems a crucial irony of A-list celebrity is that while that person seemingly strives to become universally known, her publicist controls exposure (Gamson, 1994). Consequently, fame is a game of calculating the celebrity’s scarcity of coverage and preserving the value of her controlled image (Gamson, 1994). Usually, the celebrity’s publicist enables this management by restricting the celebrity’s publicity to magazines with high-level status within the industry. The publicist’s actions communication control of her client’s celebrity currency and actively shifts the question from “Is the celebrity right for the magazine” to “Is the magazine good enough for the celebrity?”

A relatively new phenomenon, and one the editors ardently spent much time discussing, is when different genres of magazines attempt to book the same dozen or so celebrities for a cover. For example, women’s magazines are now competing with news magazines and even national newspapers for a celebrity’s time. Editor F exemplifies this conundrum: “Publicists don’t call me for the cover stories; I have to chase those for the most part because all the women we want have a world of options.”

While the sheer volume of celebrities in United States culture may allow for an increasing number of unique inside feature stories, women’s magazines that photograph their covers (as opposed to using paparazzi photos) want only what is known as the A-list celebrity. According to the editors interviewed, the A-list celebrity is someone who has been a proven bestseller on the newsstand, such as Julia Roberts or Jennifer Aniston. Many of the editors, such as Editor E, believed the increasing number of magazines willing to forgo their demographics, or core readership, to book an A-list cover, had destroyed their “right” to the A-list group:

I think there was a day when magazines would be able to put models on the cover half the year or more, but that's not the case anymore. There are very few magazines that feature models on the covers ever. I work at a magazine that fortunately can do that still, but it's very unusual, the climate is extremely competitive in the celebrity world. And at the end of the day every magazine has twelve issues and they all want the same twelve girls for the same twelve movies.

Another editor claimed that the line between A-list celebrities and disposable celebrities shifts when economics are concerned. The editor said if a celebrity is momentarily very popular, an editor might forgo the usual A-list celebrities in lieu of a possibly risky—but bankable—cover. In these situations, an economic imperative to achieve quick newsstand sales distorts the notion of the traditional information subsidy being negotiated by the entertainment editor. In lieu of negotiating with the publicist of a top-selling A-list celebrity, the editor may instead opt for an opportune starlet, whose publicist might be more likely to have fewer restrictions. However, the choice to put a lesser-known celebrity on the cover could shape both the perception of the magazine and the relationship the booker has with more-established publicists.

Positioning the Magazine

McManus suggests economic rationalism is the fundamental logic behind media routines (Curtin, 1999). As such, media production processes must seek “the least expensive mix of content that protects the interest of sponsors and investors while garnering the largest audience advertisers will pay to reach” (Curtin, 1999, p. 54). Therefore, it follows that it is in any women's magazine's best economic interest to position itself as a harbinger of upward mobility and personal aspiration.

To attain such status, celebrity bookers or entertainment editors try to elevate mold the magazine's status with publicists. However, Editor C exemplified the frustration an editor feels when this goal directed behavior, aimed at explicit ends which include future negotiations with key publicists, isn't successful:

But the thing about Magazine X is that no publicist wanted their client to be on the cover because it was perceived as an old woman's magazine. Even though they had been trying for so long to turn it into a young mother's magazine, it was a huge hurdle to get over as a booker at the magazine. To call up somebody and say we want Renee Zellweger they're like, forget it, Renee's not...she's only 33 years old, or she was at the time. And I'd say, 'but we're aiming for that age group, 32 to 38.' Forget it.

While the magazine may experience an economic hit in order to establish its new image, Editor D said an editor-in-chief is usually willing to compromise with the expectation that the investment will enhance the magazine's perceived sophistication and thus increase future A-list bookings.

Editor / Publicist Longevity

Editor A stated that a booker's relationship with a publicist is "a two-way street. We have to trust and respect each other's opinions, because at the end of the day we're both trying to reach the same goals." However other editors readily explicated nuances of their relationships with publicists. Specifically, editors emphasized two notions pertaining to how their work experience correlates with their success within the celebrity booking business: 1) The longer an editor is in the celebrity-booking business, the more she can cultivate public relations and increase negotiation leverage, and 2) longevity is irrelevant if an editor works for a "top-shelf" magazine such as *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, or *Vanity Fair*. These cognitive issues between negotiators pertain to Putnam and Roloff's (1992) dimension of degree to which the negotiators understand or are well known to each other.

Editor D illustrated the first aspect by claiming that her work experience and seasoned reputation within entertainment journalism allowed her to book celebrities whose publicists would have otherwise dismissed the magazine due to its sometimes-lackluster editorial content. She believed the mutual assessment of editor/publicist was directly related to her magazine's success or failure at featuring A-list celebrities. While Editor D acknowledged that her sources would not always acquiesce their top clients, she claimed her longevity benefits certain negotiations:

And I think in my case, and one of the reasons Publisher X hired me, in the case of Magazine X, I've been doing this for a long time. The relationships do come into play. And I do have really solid relationships with publicists. And they needed somebody who could, and this is not patting, but there's this publicist named Publicist X, and she is the most powerful publicist in the business. She and I have a fifteen-year history. And she's never worked with Magazine X. Do I get all of her A-listers? No, but she just gave me Celebrity X for Magazine X on a new marriage story. She never worked with Magazine X before I came.

Regardless, these relationships are further tested if a celebrity's placement is approved and the next step, negotiating for creative control of the feature, begins.

Publicist Approval

Because magazines are so dependent on the celebrity cover image for newsstand sales, editors are frequently immobilized to control content or artistic considerations (Gamson, 1994). Bookers may concede such conditions if they feel the interaction will allow them to achieve the explicit ends: their goal booking. A real-life example of this publicist-controlled tactic was the *Rolling Stone* magazine writer who was personally selected by Tom Cruise's publicist to write a feature story about Cruise for the music magazine. In addition to being hand picked, the writer had to agree not to ask the highly private superstar any personal questions during that interview (Friend, 2002). Editor D's comments demonstrated what is certainly a prevalent reaction within the publishing industry:

The problem is, and much more so these days than even five years ago, but because so many deals are made these days, because we are all competing for the same celebrities. It's like what are you willing to trade? Photo approval? Copy approval? Writer approval? Because everybody does trade on that, you're seeing stories on celebrities that are not necessarily the real story, just the negotiated story.

Consequently, a celebrity's marketability is another point of contention during the editor/publicist negotiations. While the editor may claim that the celebrity would be a good fit for the magazine's readership, the publicist might hesitate until content and/or artistic demands are met. Several editors voiced their feelings of frustration and loss of power during the negotiating phase, citing instances where negotiations were ultimately scrapped and they would then have to humbly report the defeat to their editor-in-chief. When one negotiator declines to participate in the exercise, no matter what bargain or possible benefit, all transactions disintegrate. The obstacle that impedes the relational commitment in this case might be the publicist's perception of few commonalities or the view they have a more attractive alternative: namely, another magazine.

Gaining Credentials with Publicists

Although most editors claimed that newsstand sales are the driving impetus behind most of the celebrity choices for mainstream women's magazine covers, one editor reported that her magazine sometimes puts a celebrity on the cover who is less popular with the audience but more respected within the industry. This decision reflects substantial confidence from the editor's editor-in-chief, who will surely have to defend the cover choice to the corporate managers when decreased newsstand numbers emerge. However, the majority of editors said they had used this strategy to manipulate publicists in the hopes that the publicists would eventually allow their A-list clients to be in the magazine. Editor D suggested that by demonstrating to the publicist that the magazine is willing to feature a celebrity who has more industry esteem than mainstream America admiration—for instance, booking the quirky actress Maggie Gyllenhaal instead of box office maven Julia Roberts—the editor can reshape the magazine's position as one of progressive risk taker. According to the editor, "I talked my editor into doing Celebrity Couple X, which reinforced this new image and "they're so cool," but does mass America relate to them? No. But it went miles for me in terms of the publicists."

Such a sentiment indicates that bookers recognize methods of increasing the perceived status of their magazine. This relational object also focuses on attention to future interactions, a key aspect of negotiation behavior. In addition to such strategic planning, those interviewed also recognized the most effective way of sabotaging their magazine's position within the booking industry: the celebrity write-around story.

Negative Credentials: The Write-Around

A “write-around” story is the editorial product that results when a booker bypasses all publicist negotiations in lieu of a celebrity story with no publicist approval. The story usually includes either photography obtained from a photo agency (which doesn’t need publicist approval) or purchased paparazzi photography (Chen, 2003). The writer does not interview the celebrity but uses quotes from previous stories and information obtained from secondary sources. Because the publicist has not given the magazine approval for the story, it is unlikely they will approve an interview request.

The short-term gain from a write-around is potential newsstand profits, but long-term losses are likely a damaged relationship with a publicist, who may react by withholding his or her entire stable of clients from the magazine (Gamson, 1994). In addition, the latter situation could injure the editor’s credibility with other members of the industry who are informed of the incident (Gamson, 1994). Hence, the write-around threatens future negotiations by potentially destroying publicist trust.

As illustration, Editor C reported that her magazine published two write-around stories about the same A-list actress within a short period of time. The editor claimed the editorial decision caused a firestorm of bad press and harmed the magazine’s relationship with a very powerful publicist:

He blackballed Magazine X. We did a second write-around of Celebrity X a year later, which was just the biggest mistake that that editor could’ve done, that was the nail in her coffin. I do believe that is why she ended up getting fired. Publicist X made such a big deal about that cover, he made such a big deal. He called all the papers—Page Six, Rush & Malloy, every one of his contacts, and smeared Magazine X’s name. Luckily, he didn’t smear mine; he did end up believing me when I said I wasn’t responsible for it happening.

This example also implies the hierarchy tacit to these magazines, which gives the editor-in-chief power over the celebrity booker. These inter-organizational relationships are an additional layer to consider.

Negotiating with the Editor-in-Chief

All the editors claimed their editor-in-chiefs exercised influence in celebrity decisions, and the majority said they welcomed this input. Many said their editors were shrewd enough to understand the importance of long-term relationships, and thus accepted a publicist’s denial. In these cases, the editor-in-chief illustrates relational objectives adherent to future negotiations. However, at least one editor, illustrated by Editor C’s comments, said her editor only prioritized short-term goals:

My position was the entertainment editor, and unfortunately, I did care. But I was having foresight, as opposed to Editor X’s complete lack of foresight, which is, if you

screw this publicist and that client, you will never get another one of their clients. Or, it will be a very long time until you get another one of their clients. And Editor X just didn't care. She'd say, 'screw 'em.' My favorite question she'd ask is, 'who else does he have that we might want?' And if no one on the list ended up as anyone to her, she'd be like, 'screw 'em. We'll just fuck them over.'

In addition, Editor C claimed she was often made to explain to a publicist who had previously agreed to a booking why their earlier deal was negated, consequently placing her in a powerless position between her editor-in-chief and the publicist. Her relationship with the publicist would be tarnished after such an incident, making it more difficult for her to negotiate further bookings. Such contentious inter-organizational routines can thus create enduring tensions by depleting trust within the information subsidy relationship and diminishing potential long-term economic returns.

Controlling Emotions

In a business where the editors frequently depict their dealings with publicists as "bargaining" and "battling" and where flattery often accompanies feelings of strongly shared hostilities, emotional breakdowns are usually inevitable (Gamson, 1994). When a cover falls through or a publicist won't agree to a writer, when information subsidy negotiations have stalled or failed, entertainment editors claim they adopt a myriad of reactionary behavior. The cognitive issues at play here are feelings (primary emotions such as anger, surprise, or happiness) and the degree to which the negotiators understand each other (Putnam & Roloff, 1992).

Editor B, wishing to appear in control when negotiations fell apart, said she did not share her emotions with the publicists: "I'm sure you've heard about these situations where friendships are put at risk and people just lose their minds over it. It's a real rat race and every editor and publicist has their own way of doing things."

Fredin (1984) writes that controlling one's emotions may be a manipulative trait, but not always cynically so. For Editor B, self-monitoring with the publicist meant she could accomplish a standard of decorum and even-temperedness, which could lead to the long-term achievement of goals. In addition, this behavior allowed her the essential tools to manage repeated interactions with the publicist without fear of noticeable anxiety.

In contrast, Editor C regularly yelled into her phone and cried in the workplace, thus communicating primary emotions to both the publicists and her coworkers. Even though the booker had a long-term relationship with the publicist and understood the obstacles, her emotions were easily influenced by negotiation failure. Her actions permitted the power dynamics in the source-reporter relation to swing toward the publicist, thus giving the publicist more control (Cameron, Sallot, & Curtin, 1997). Editor C's erratic behavior, as described here, exemplifies the adversarial relationship between the two professionals and the potential loss of professional strength that may result when no self-monitoring is employed:

I've had huge, huge fights with publicists, and I mean huge. I had this one publicist threatening me saying, 'I am downstairs in front of your building, and I'm going to come up there and raise hell in front of everybody if you don't fix this! I said let me call you back and started crying, and I went to talk to Debbie, this was at Magazine X, and I said, 'I'm sorry I'm crying but I'm verklempt, because this publicist just went berserk on me on the phone and she threatened to come up here.' She made my emotions go from crying to yelling to catatonic.

While all the editors described varying levels of self-monitoring during emotional episodes, each felt their acquired strategic traits were ultimately economically beneficial to the long-term welfare of their magazines. Whether they suppressed their feelings, acted submissively, or reacted antagonistically to a publicist, the editors say they adjusted their social presence to gain stability and even dominance in ongoing power relationships.

Discussion

This study asks how a celebrity booker's duties bridge conventional journalism. The analysis illustrates that a magazine's celebrity booker must adopt certain negotiation behaviors to achieve her goals, most of which tacitly recognize the need for future interactions and restoration or creation of trust between the two negotiating parties. While editors in other more conventional journalistic roles undoubtedly also utilize some of these behaviors, the information subsidy involved in this case, a cultural commodity such as a celebrity, establishes this relationship to be unique. Whereas a conventional journalist may pursue other sourcing avenues for a story, a celebrity story generally has only one gate: the publicist. Ramifications of this factor provide an exceptional exercise of information subsidy acquisition, which rely mainly on negotiation tactics that are generally not the exclusive means for gaining subsidies elsewhere in the industry.

However, this study's theoretical lens can also be applied to other media industries that opt to utilize exclusive celebrity content, so long as the subsidy is controlled by one central figure. Considering this, it is beneficial to understand what motivated this study's editors to function within the confines of their subsidy roles.

Whether they used their gut instincts or a database of celebrities to guide them, the editors seemed to pride themselves on being wranglers of fame. They appeared to understand the important role they play in this dynamic and were therefore enthusiastic about what they do. None of the editors degraded their duties; in fact, many of them presented the allusion of a soldier readying for war. The editors all felt they faced heavy odds in the battle for landing an A-list celebrity, and were perhaps moved to speak defensively about their actions or their magazines decisions.

As expected, all the editors exhibited qualities of a self-monitoring person during their negotiations for the information subsidy. In keeping with negotiation tactics, all the editors had to acquire both offensive and defensive skills to attain their objective. Some of their abilities were theatrical, some were manipulative, and some were sincere. All had one

objective: to book an A-list celebrity for the magazine cover. In effect, it seems the bookers examined all adopted three key characteristics to be successful at their job: trust, flexibility, and mutual reliance.

Trust is a significant relational objective utilized by all editors, since much of the editor/publicist relationship, especially during the negotiation phase, depends on the belief in one's word. When an editor is attempting to persuade a publicist to book their client in the magazine by offering the best platform for showcasing the celebrity, the publicist can only trust that the editor will keep her word. Similarly, if a publicist promises an A-list celebrity to an editor if the editor books the publicist's B-list client, the editor must trust that the publicist will not pull the A-list client at the last minute. While relationship longevity contributes greatly to trust, the magazine's reputation is also a contributing factor. If a magazine has a somewhat shoddy reputation with publicists, the editor might have to work twice as hard to establish trust and maintain a relational commitment with a publicist in order to get a star client.

Flexibility to adaptable planning must also be acknowledged as a driving force behind a booker's goal attainment, as an editor must allow herself to be occasionally controlled or manipulated by the publicist in order to stabilize future interactions. Not being flexible will only doom the editor's publication that relies on negotiated relationships for celebrity access. For example, if a publicist says her client will only do a story if the writer refrains from asking about the celebrity's recent divorce, the editor must decide if that celebrity's coverage is worth that information subsidy sacrifice. If the client is indeed a valuable enough commodity, the editor must adapt her planning to achieve a favorable outcome for the magazine. Most of the women interviewed displayed this flexibility because their magazines often did not have the reputations to be otherwise.

Mutual reliance is perhaps the most basic characteristic of the booker/publicist relationship. In this case, the mutual reliance is based on two primary elements: the publicist's client and the magazine's celebrity coverage. The relationship is driven by pointed goal directed behavior aimed at explicit ends: to cooperate enough to put out a product satisfactory to both parties. Mutual reliance is strongest with A-list celebrity publicist and top-shelf magazines, where trust and flexibility is secondary to a magazine's long-term reputation and limited competition. However, editors at less reputed women's magazines recognize they are at a negotiation disadvantage because there are numerous alternatives for the publicist's client.

In addition to these three emergent themes, interviews with the editors also suggest other elements embedded within their professional dynamics. For instance, the editors' tone of voice during the interviews and behavior within their natural workplace environment provided rich context to their verbal communication. The women displayed an ardent fervency about their jobs. The way the editors describe celebrities (often by first names only) with the inflected reverence usually reserved for talking about a close friend told the researcher that these women seemed to feel a connection with certain celebrities. Similarly,

an editor's vocal tone and non-verbal cues belied a disdain for other celebrities. Such cues indicated that an editor must certainly adjust her social presence during interactions with a publicist or else jeopardize her goal achievement.

It is also significant to note that despite showing passion for their occupations, several of the editors displayed a desire to get out of the celebrity booking industry and possibly out of publishing entirely. These editors claimed their job both bruised their psyche and diminished their work satisfaction. Certainly, such sentiments might serve as an indicator of the volatile nature of this booking industry. Similarly, we must consider that when an editor moves to the now-crucial position of celebrity booker, her talents as writer, line editor, or creative brainstormer are often put on hold. Frequently, she is then pigeonholed in the booker position, even if she seeks another magazine job.

Since this celebrity industrial complex is an ever-evolving phenomenon, it is difficult to accurately scrutinize long-term employment patterns of entertainment editors and celebrity bookers. However, it seems safe to assume that the turnover within the publishing industry might match that of the A-list actresses. While their fires may burn brightly for a while, it seems unlikely they can sustain the heat forever. Indeed, the economic rationalism inherent to the celebrity booking has cast a profound shadow upon those editors involved in the process.

This study illustrates that the editor's celebrity choices are not dictated by a star's talent or virtue, but by the commercial value of the star's likeness. While this study infers that it is the celebrity publicist who holds primary power in this newfound relationship by controlling the value of a celebrity's likeness, research examining the publicist's point of view is also essential. Consequently, future studies should include the other side of the dynamic, that of a celebrity publicist. While this research aimed at understanding a part of that relationship, a holistic consideration would certainly provide invaluable additional context.

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