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O'Dwyer's

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BROOKLYN NAVY YARD WANTS PR PARTNER

The Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corp. wants a PR firm to position the Yard as a global model for urban manufacturing, equitable economic development and community partnerships.



The 300-acre complex is home to more than 550 businesses that employ 11K people and generate \$2.3B in yearly economic impact.

Tenants include manufacturers, media & entertainment production houses, commercial artists, fashion & jewelry designers and food providers.

The Yard is undergoing its biggest expansion since WWII, which will add 1M square feet over the next decade, bringing the number of businesses to about 750 and employees to 14K.

The selected PR firm will broaden awareness of the Yard's mission; amplify space leasing efforts, exhibits, programs, and long-term expansion plans. It will specialize in storytelling focused on innovative businesses, workforce/education, economic development and real estate projects.

Proposals are due Nov. 22. They go to sbaez@bnydc.org.
[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

J&J PRO TAKES AB INBEV POST

AB inBev has hired Donna Lorenson as chief communications officer and elevated the PR function to the senior leadership structure in the aftermath of the Bud Light marketing disaster.



Donna Lorenson

Upon joining AB inBev on Nov. 13, she will report to CEO Michel Doukeris.

Lorenson spent nearly eight years at J&J, rising to the VP-global communications & PA post at the consumer health group.

Earlier, she headed US communications at Alcon Laboratories and did a 10-year stint at Edelman.

She joins AB InBev from J&J spin-off Kenvue (Tylenol, Listerine, Band-Aid), where she was chief corporate affairs officer.

Lorenson is a military veteran, who served as a US Army military police captain in Germany.

She helped secure polling sites as a member of the 1996 Peace Implementation Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina in collaboration with the Russian military force.

META'S WOLBERS JOINS GLEN ECHO

[Glen Echo Group](#) has recruited Rachel Wolbers, who served as head of global engagement at Meta's oversight board for more than three years, for the VP tech policy worldwide post.

Prior to Meta, Wolbers was an internet and telecommunications policy specialist at the Dept. of Commerce and on Capitol Hill. She also was policy director at Engine Advocacy, a non-profit tech policy, research and advocacy organization that works to bridge the gap between policymakers and startups.



Rachel Wolbers

Maura Corbett, GEG founder, said her firm has worked with Wolbers throughout her career. Her shop represents Engine Advocacy. "Glen Echo Group gains an expert navigator to help guide our clients and partners through this next chapter of the technology revolution," Corbett said.

Wolbers said she's eager to "address some of the trickiest problems facing the technology industry through stakeholder engagement and education."

Based in Washington with offices in Chicago and Amsterdam, GEG has counseled Broadcom, Google, Netflix, Intuit, Pew Charitable Trusts, Reporters Without Borders, and Consumer Technology Assn.

[BerlinRosen](#) in 2022 took a majority stake in GEG.

C STREET WORKS WEWORK CHAPTER 11 FILING

C Street Advisory Group is handling WeWork as the office-sharing company files for Chapter 11, falling victim to the transition to work-from-home and high lease costs.

The company, which had a market valuation of \$47B in 2019, was worth \$45M at the Nov. 6 restructuring filing.

It is counting on the success of a "value maximizing lease rejection plan" to position for operational and financial success.

CEO David Tolley promised to aggressively address WeWork's legacy leases and dramatically improve its balance sheet.

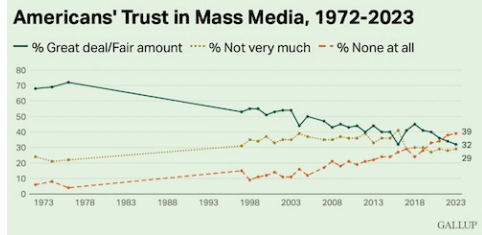
"We defined a new category of working, and these steps will enable us to remain the global leader in flexible work," he said.

Tolley said WeWork "has a strong foundation, a dynamic business and a bright future."



TRUST IN U.S. MEDIA HITS RECORD LOW

It's no surprise that Americans have longstanding trust issues with the U.S. news media industry. Ever since the 2016 election, poll after poll shows that Americans' faith in newspapers, TV and radio stations to deliver the facts has



fallen sharply. And now?

According to a new survey by opinion poll giant Gallup, Americans' confidence in the media to report

the news fairly and accurately is at its lowest point on record.

The annual survey, which examines Americans' trust in news media and their current attitudes toward the press, found only 32 percent of U.S. adults said they have a "great deal" or "fair amount" of trust in the news media's reporting, illustrating a clear downward trend from 2022's 34 percent and 2021's 36 percent, according to previous Gallup reports.

Worse, the share of Americans who claim they have no confidence in the news now surpasses the dwindling share of those who say they trust America's mass media institutions: 39 percent said they have absolutely no confidence at all in the media's ability to report the news in an accurate and fair way. This marks the highest lack of media confidence on record and beats the previous all-time high of 27 percent recorded in 2016.

An additional 29 percent of U.S. adults said they possess "not very much" trust in the news media industry. Only seven percent of those surveyed said they trust the media a "great deal."

As if the news couldn't get any worse, Americans' widespread distrust of the media now appears to be spilling across political lines as well. While Americans who identify as Republican have historically exhibited less trust in the press than those of other political parties, the Gallup poll found that even among those identifying as Democrats—a demographic that has long served as a bulwark of media support—an unfavorable view of the press is gaining ground.

Democrats' trust in the news media fell significantly this year: 58 percent of Democrats said they have a "great deal" or "fair amount" of confidence in the media. This marks the lowest number since 2016 (51 percent) and also reveals a 12-point slip in trust among this demographic since last year (70 percent).

Republicans, on the other hand, continue to harbor a notably unfavorable view of the press: 58 percent of those identifying as Republican said they have no trust at all in the media, and only 11 percent of Republicans said they have a "great deal" or "fair amount" of confidence in the media.

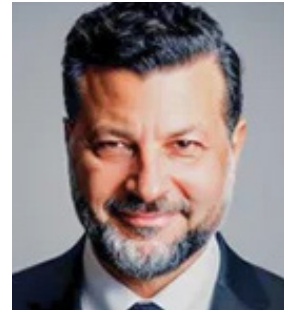
The partisan gap between Democrats who trust the media and Republicans who distrust the media now stands at 47 points, the narrowest since 2016.

A Reuters Institute survey last year found that the U.S. now exhibits the highest rate of media distrust of any country in the world.

Gallup's report was based on a survey of 1,016 adults aged 18 and older living in the U.S. The sample for the study was supplied by marketing data and analytics company Dynata. The survey was conducted in September.

ON THE MOVE

Ringer Sciences and **The Next Practices Group** hire **David Armano** as EVP, analytics AI strategy, a newly created position. Armano was most recently senior director of marketing at Soul Machines, an AI avatar technology platform powered by Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT. He has previously worked at Edelman, Digitas, Critical Mass and Agency.com. At Ringer, Armano will lead the productization and commercial strategy for the company's AI-backed analytics, communications and marketing offerings. He will also coordinate the efforts across NPG to work with clients who seek to modernize their analytics functions with the assistance of AI.



David Armano

Statewide Public Affairs brings on **John Olsen** as an SVP to co-chair the agency's newly created emerging technologies & innovation practice alongside agency partner Wayne Lair, Jr. Olsen was most recently New York state lead at consultancy Standard Practice. He has also served as SVP of state government affairs for the Internet Association and New York state lead for the Blockchain Association. At Statewide, John will guide clients through New York's regulatory and legislative environment.

O'Connell & Goldberg Public Relations names **Melinda Sherwood** as VP. Sherwood joins the agency from Kreps PR + Marketing, where she was an EVP, leading real estate and hospitality client accounts. She has also served as communications and media manager at real estate services and investment firm CBRE. In her new post, Sherwood will provide strategic counsel and oversight for the agency's real estate, corporate and education clients.

Manulife Asia appoints **Sabrina Cheung** as chief communications officer. Cheung joins Manulife Asia from AXA, Asia and Africa where she served as chief brand and communications officer. She has also held global and regional leadership communications roles at Cigna International Markets, adidas Group, the Coca-Cola Company and McCann WorldGroup. Based in Hong Kong, Cheung will lead strategic communications, incorporating media relations, thought leadership, social media, colleague communications, content and events.



Sabrina Cheung

IW Group, which specializes in multicultural youth marketing, promotes **Karen Tran Wood** to group director of entertainment marketing and publicity, a newly created role. Wood has been with the agency since 2020, most recently serving as director of publicity. In that position, she oversaw multicultural theatrical and television marketing and publicity campaigns for such clients as Warner Bros., Disney, Netflix, Hulu and Fox. In her new post, she will oversee the growth of the agency's entertainment marketing practice, focusing on diversifying its digital and creator/influencer offerings and spearheading the development of a new brand partnerships team.

TELLING YOUR INNOVATION STORY

Every tech company wants to be perceived as innovative.

These same tech companies also expect communications to do the heavy lifting in telling their innovation stories and ultimately generating earned media.

That's a problem.

Hundreds of pitches touting the most amazing advances since the baguette—better than sliced bread—rain down on journalists every week. As you might suspect, journalists have become desensitized to these pleas for coverage of “the next revolution.” The *Wall Street Journal* even devoted an article to the misuse of the word “innovation” and derivatives, calling out companies for including the “i” word 33,528 times in earnings calls over a 12-month period. Now comes the sobering part. That article ran in 2012. The situation is worse today.



Lou Hoffman

Channeling the Total Quality Control brigade, let's break down the issue and identify solutions.

First things first: Spilling forth a bunch of adjectives and adverbs to make the case that your new product or technology is a game changer won't work. In fact, it has the opposite effect. Instead, you need to show—don't tell—journalists so they come to the conclusion on their own.

Staying with a TQC mentality, the root cause for failure isn't the pitch. Instead, the root cause for failure lies in what happens before the pitch: the sourcing session(s) with the company's engineers, scientists and other subject matter experts. This is when you dig into the overarching question: “What makes this innovative?” Most PR practitioners understand the makings of a good story, but they move forward with the flawed innovation pitch because that's all the information they have.

Which brings me to the punchline.

The PR profession vastly undervalues interviewing expertise. It starts in college. Try to find a curriculum for mass communications or PR that offers a class on interviewing. And once you're in the working world, you'll find the same absence of how-to-interview training for PR professionals. Yet, it's interviewing expertise more than any other quality that will determine whether that pitch about a company's innovation lands with journalists.

Toward this end, the following techniques ground our sourcing sessions with clients:

Do your homework. This means not only understanding the topic but also the person or people you're interviewing. Before meeting an engineer slated for a sourcing session, we found out he had emigrated from Cuba. How did we learn this useful tidbit? Just took a look at his LinkedIn profile.

The interview starts before the interview. Email a few questions to the interviewee ahead of time. Don't overwhelm the source. We typically include one question that establishes we're after a smidgen of drama, not a tutorial in molecular physics. Sometimes, we'll include a story from a publication, pointing out a passage or two as an example of the type of content we're after.

The warm-up act. Start with a few easy questions designed to simply get the person talking. This way, you build momentum leading into the tougher questions.

Too many cooks won't spill the beans. Often, multiple people are involved with a particular innovation. Don't interview them together. It's better to talk with each in a one-on-one setting with the content taken from the initial interview building into the second chat and beyond. Such an approach takes more time, but you'll end up with richer content.

Don't be afraid to push (shove?) the source. For most people from technical orientations opening up and sharing information doesn't come naturally. If you make sources a little uncomfortable in going places they didn't expect, that's okay.

Improv produces 'gold.' Listen to what's being said. While it's good to have questions prepared, don't be married to your questions. Be willing to explore unexpected areas that come out of the discussion. Digging out the humanity always makes for a compelling way to tell the innovation story.

Connect the dots even if you don't know where they're headed. Related to the improv, we've found that asking a source about point A can move the conversation to point B, which takes us to point C, a springboard to point D where the storytelling gold is buried. You can't simply jump to exploring point D. The process needs to take you there.

It's been our experience that these techniques produce the type of fodder that will give you a fighting chance to land that innovation pitch with journalists.

We've also taken those pre-interview questions to the next level, creating a workshop called “Helping Sources Become Better Sources.” By helping sources understand the “sausage making” of journalism, we increase the probability that they cough up the good stuff in sourcing sessions.

No question, the media sets a high bar these days when it comes to writing about innovation. Yet, they recognize that invention defines tech more than any other industry. PR just needs to construct pitches so journalists can see the path to a story on a major advancement, not incremental improvement.

Lou Hoffman is CEO of the Hoffman Agency, a global communications consultancy that specializes in the tech sector.

CA SEEKS PR FOR OCal CANNABIS SEAL

The California Department of Food and Agriculture plans to hire a firm for an education and outreach campaign to create awareness of the OCal seal on commercial cannabis products.

The goal is to make the seal a known and trusted entity by familiarizing industry and consumers with the seal and explaining why it matters.

CDFA wants consumers, farmers and retailers to automatically, even subconsciously, associate the OCal seal with “organic cultivation,” “state oversight” and “certification integrity,” according to the RFP.

As the seal gains recognition as a reliable and truthful source of product information for consumers looking for organically grown cannabis, CDFA expects its value in the marketplace to rise, encouraging more certifications.

CDFA plans to issue a \$150K contract from Jan. 1, 2024 through June 2025.

If the OCal seal has gained viable momentum in the marketplace, CDFA's partner “will transition to performing outreach to maintain and increase consumer confidence by making sure the public is aware of the veracity of program oversight.”

Proposals are due Nov. 16 at [CDFA's electronic procurement portal](#).

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).



TD BANK RECRUITS NIELSEN'S ALEXANDER

TD Bank names Suzanne Alexander SVP, head of corporate and executive communications, a newly created role.

Alexander was most recently VP corporate communications at Nielsen, serving as chief speechwriter for the company's chairman and CEO. Before that she was VP corporate and executive communications at Marriott International.



Suzanne Alexander

At TD Bank, Alexander will lead communications strategy and delivery for the office of the CEO and the bank's corporate and control functions.

"Suzanne is an exceptional communications leader and an award-winning journalist," said TD Bank chief communications officer John Pluhowski.

CHICAGO SEEKS PR FOR LEARNING PROGRAMS

Chicago's Department of Family and Support Services is looking for a partner to handle strategic communications and recruitment efforts for its early learning programs available to low-income families and at-risk kids.

The programs provide children from birth to age five with developmentally appropriate services so they are school-ready when they matriculate to kindergarten.

The Department wants messaging to increase the recruitment, enrollment and attendance of children from vulnerable communities, such as those isolated due to factors including transportation, economics, language, immigration status, disabilities, deep poverty and homelessness, according to the RFP.

The selected firm will coordinate outreach with street teams at community events throughout Chicago, and establish connections with local groups, businesses and medical facilities to promote early learning programs.

Proposals are due Nov. 21 at [Chicago's electronic procurement portal](#).

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

APCO WORLDWIDE UNVEILS MARGY

APCO Worldwide launches Margy, a form of adaptive intelligence that applies the collective knowledge and history of the APCO team to the agency's client strategy and work.

The platform, named after and inspired by APCO Worldwide founder Margery Kraus, also learns from the firm's top experts to provide better insights over time.

Developed by APCO's AI Comms Lab under the leadership of AI strategist Dr. Abdullah Sahyoun, Margy can automate content generation, help teams work more efficiently and has a reputation management tool that monitors a client's online presence and manages potential crises.

APCO has also created a new AI advisory offering for clients who are facing business challenges, navigating their own AI transformations, or are anxious to fast-forward their growth and gain market share.



ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

LINK Strategic Partners lands the **National Cherry Blossom Festival**, which will be held from March 20 to April 14, 2024. The Washington, DC-

based social impact firm will provide comprehensive PR services to support the mission of the festival, which will feature diverse and creative programming that promotes traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty and community spirit.

Markacy signs on as agency of record for **Oova**, an at-home fertility tracker. The agency will be supporting Oova across their B2C and B2B sales funnels covering CRM (email/SMS marketing), creative and message testing, and advertising. Founded in 2017 by Amy Divaraniya, PhD, Oova works with hundreds of clinicians and thousands of direct-to-consumer customers. "We chose Markacy as our agency of record because their approach was different and tailored to our business model, margin and financial goals," said Divaraniya.

Firecracker PR picks up **Attestiv**, a company that says its platform can assure the authenticity of digital media captured by any person or device utilizing artificial intelligence and blockchain technology. Firecracker will work to increase awareness of the company's solution for organizations in such sectors as insurance, financial services, healthcare and news & media.

IMAGINE PR lands **Pegasus Lodges**, four properties that focus on such outdoor activities as surfing, fishing and hiking. The agency will provide integrated public relations and brand partnerships, including such services as strategic communications counsel, media relations, and influencer connections. Founded in 2012, the Pegasus Lodges portfolio currently features Pinnacles North Telo and Telo Island Lodge (in Indonesia), Aganoa Beach Fales (in Samoa) and Nootka Wilderness Lodge (in British Columbia).

Marino adds **Smeraldina Water** and **Pasta Toscana** to its roster of Italian food and beverage brands. For Smeraldina, a family-owned bottled water, the agency is tasked with increasing the brand's visibility in the US market through creative media relations and influencer engagement strategies. Pasta Toscana, a Tuscany-based pasta brand that is also family-owned, has tapped Marino to develop and execute a tailored social media strategy to educate consumers.

UpSpring picks up media relations duties for **Almond**, a female-founded, venture-backed startup focused on changing obstetrical-gynecological (ObGyn) care. The agency's efforts will aim to help the newly established company gain exposure and expand beyond their California location in West Hollywood. Almond says that by streamlining top-tier ObGyn services, both in-person and via telehealth, it can help women realize their health aspirations more efficiently.

CBC adds **Tractor Beverage Company**, a certified organic, non-GMO beverage company that targets the food service sector. The agency will provide comprehensive public relations services to Tractor, including an integrated mix of creative media relations, content creation, distribution, and paid media. Tractor was named to Fast Company's annual list of the World's Most Innovative Companies in 2021.



UKRAINE ORTHODOX CHURCH GETS US REP

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has hired Amsterdam & Partners to fight the effort by Ukraine's parliament to ban the church for its historic ties to Russia.



The firm has conducted outreach to the State Dept.'s Office of Religious Freedom, White House, and offices of Sens. Jon Ossoff, Marco Rubio and Jeanne Shaheen. It has received \$7K for its efforts.

UOC officially declared its independence from the Moscow church but some local churches have maintained their ties. Ukraine this month has filed criminal charges against Patriarch Kirill, who heads the Russian Orthodox Church and has close ties with Vladimir Putin.

It accuses Kirill of "[infringing on Ukraine's territorial integrity, justifying armed aggression and planning and preparing an aggressive war.](#)"

ALASKA WANTS TO PUSH HEALTHY EATING

Alaska has budgeted \$1M for a firm to run a social marketing campaign to encourage Alaskans enrolled in the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to eat more fruits and vegetables.

The goal is to reduce diet related chronic disease and obesity among food stamp recipients.



The selected firm will create public education and campaign pieces and images for online channels, including banners, photos, texts and graphics for Facebook, X, Google, YouTube, and other channels. It also will develop earned media opportunities.

The campaign is to run over a five-year period.

Responses are due Nov. 17. Email them to Alaska Dept. of Public Health procurement specialist Todd Webster at russell.webster@alaska.gov. [Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

KUPFERMAN TAKES CHUCK E. CHEESE POST

CEC Entertainment, LLC, appoints Mark Kupferman as chief insights and marketing officer for the company's flagship brand, Chuck E. Cheese, and its virtual kitchen brands, including Pasqually's Pizza & Wings.



Mark Kupferman

Kupferman was most recently chief commercial officer at Ruth's Chris Steak House. Before that, he was SVP of consumer & guest experience at Six Flags Entertainment and led the research and insights teams at Universal Orlando and Paramount Parks.

In his new post, Kupferman will lead all marketing functions, menu innovation and communications for Chuck E. Cheese, as well as its digital marketing and consumer journey initiatives. He will also oversee the entire company's insights and research responsibilities.

MEDIA MANEUVERS

China-owned **TikTok** is a propaganda tool that has the potential to influence a generation of young Americans and should be required to register as a foreign agent. That's the gist of a Nov. 8 letter from Congressmen Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ) and Don Bacon (R-NE) to attorney general Merrick Garland. They accuse TikTok of exhibiting a "clear pattern of operating in the US to spy on the American people and sow propaganda." Since 25 percent of Americans under age 30 get their news from TikTok, the Congressmen are "gravely concerned" about the platform's use as a propaganda outlet by China and its allies Russia and Iran. TikTok needs to register because "American citizens deserve to know whether the information and news media they consume is impartial or deceptive propaganda pushed by foreign nations," wrote the Congressmen.



The New York Times passes the 10 million subscriber barrier. A 210,000 bump in net digital-only subscribers brought that total number to 9.41 million and its 670,000 print subscribers put it over the 10 million mark overall. The company's growth is at least in part due to its expansion beyond providing the news to customers. It says that close to 3.8 million of its digital subscribers have signed up for at least one of the company's other offerings—Cooking, Games, the Wirecutter product review vertical and the sports-focused The Athletic. Adjusted operating profit for Q3 2023 was \$89.8 million, up 30.1 percent from a year earlier. The Times still has the stated goal of reaching 15 million subscribers by the end of 2027.

Vice Media, which pulled the plug on its flagship program "Vice News Tonight" in April and filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy shortly afterward as it went on the auction block, has now laid off dozens more of its staffers. The company's co-chief executives, Bruce Dixon and Hozefa Lokhandwala said the cuts were part of a plan to "restructure our overall corporate organization" by consolidating the newsroom's five divisions into two lines of business—with publishing, news and creative services operating as one unit and studios along with TV and distribution operating as the other. In June, Vice was purchased by three investment companies, including Fortress Investment Group, for \$350 million. In keeping with its reputation as a digital pioneer, Vice let the staffers go via what a Vice Union statement called "a livestream video that gave attendees no opportunity to ask questions."



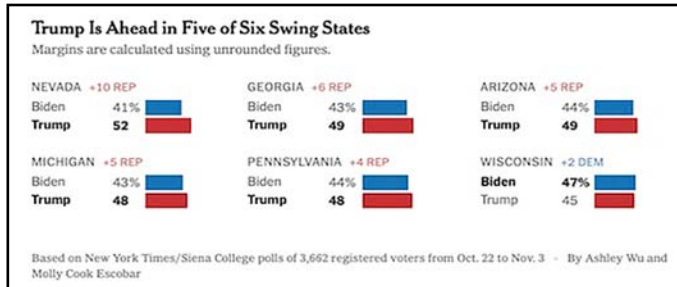
Jezebel, the feminist web site that launched in 2007, has been shut down by owner G/O Media, which also owns The Onion, Jalopnik and Gizmodo. The company says that 23 staffers, including the Jezebel team, have been laid off. G/O Media's editorial director Merrill Brown is also leaving the company. In announcing the closure, G/O Media CEO Jim Spanfeller cited "economic headwinds" and changes in audience priorities as major factors behind the shutdown. Spanfeller also said that the company had talked with over two dozen potential buyers" in an effort to keep Jezebel going, but those efforts were unsuccessful.

COMMENTARY

Whistling past the graveyard. The braintrust of the Democratic party is publicly unfettered about the shocking *New York Times* poll that has Joe Biden losing five of six battleground states to Donald Trump.

They swat away the poll, saying the election is more than a year away, or that voters haven't yet focused on the contest.

Those grand pooh-bahs believe all that Team Biden must



do is to pitch his accomplishments, and the grateful country will surely come to its senses.

That's beginning to sound like a broken record. The Bidenomics pitch just isn't cutting it.

The Times poll clearly spells out why Biden is getting his head handed to him by Trump.

More than seven-in-ten (71 percent) of the respondents say Uncle Joe is just too old for the job—including more than half of Democrats (51 percent). Slated to turn 81 on Nov. 20, Biden already is the oldest American president.

Does anybody feel Biden could handle the duties of the president at the end of his second term at age 86?

Democratic strategists need to get their heads out of the sand and push for a younger replacement for Biden, who had pitched himself as a "transitional" president when running for office. Live up to your word, Joe.

A Biden wipeout would put Democratic control of the Senate and the opportunity to regain the House at risk.

Loyalty to the president may be admirable, but the return of Trump will bring Republican control of Congress, which would doom America's democracy.

Hill+Knowlton Strategies goes back to its roots. The WPP unit has recast itself as Hill & Knowlton, which was the brand that it used when it concocted the false story about Iraqi soldiers pulling Kuwaiti babies from incubators to encourage the US to topple Saddam Hussein.

[A 15-year-old teenager made that shocking claim](#) to Congress, and it was repeated by high-level officials.

"Kept secret was that fact the witness was the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to the United States and her false testimony had more likely been organized by a public relations firm working for the Kuwaiti government," wrote Zeynep Tufekci, *New York Times* opinion columnist.

"The shocking fabrication played a key role in the effort to sell the war to the reluctant American public," noted the Princeton University professor of sociology & public affairs.

The article ran online Oct. 31 and in print on Nov. 6, head-

lined: "[Past Lies About War in the Middle East Are Getting in the Way of the Truth Today.](#)"

Human Rights Watch has slammed Hamas and Islamic Jihad for using Israeli hostages as propaganda tools.

The terrorist groups on Nov. 9 released two videos—one of a 77-year-old woman and another of a 13-year-old boy asking Israel's government to cut a deal to free them. The young Israeli also thanked Islamic Jihad for protecting him.

HRW called the videos a form of inhumane treatment that amounts to a war crime.

"Hamas and Islamic Jihad are not only unlawfully holding civilians hostage, including children, but they're also broadcasting the hostages' images to the world in their most vulnerable state," said [Omar Shakir](#), Israel and Palestine director at HRW. "Instead of filming a child under duress, the groups should release him safely to his family."

Rather than allowing the hostages to contact their families, Hamas and Islamic Jihad issued public video statements that may constitute coercion, said HRW. The human rights group demanded that Hamas and Islamic Jihad immediately and unconditionally release all civilians in their custody.

The Committee to Protect Journalists said on Nov. 8 that 39 reporters and media workers have been killed since Hamas invaded Israel on Oct. 7.

The death toll includes 34 Palestinians, four Israelis and one Lebanese. Three journalists are missing, eight are injured following assaults by Israeli police and settlers in the West Bank, and nine have been arrested.

The organization found no evidence that any of those journalists were engaging in militant activity.

CPJ noted that media workers in Gaza face extremely high risks as they attempt to cover Israel's ground assault, while facing airstrikes, disputed communications and power outages.

The Israel Defense Forces told Reuters and Agence France Press it can't guarantee the safety of reporters in the Gaza Strip.

On Oct. 27, CPJ reported that 27 journalists had died in the Israel/Hamas war.

Gangsters need not apply... New York City's The Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corp. is warning organized crime figures to stay away from the bidding on a PR contract to promote expansion of the Yard.

According to the RFP, any bidder found "to have been convicted on a felony or crime involving moral turpitude, to be an organized figure, to be under indictment or criminal investigation, to be in arrears or in default on any debt, contract or obligation to the City or State of New York" will not be awarded the business.

The Yard is undergoing the biggest expansion since WWII, boosting employment by 3K to 17K over the next decade.

It employed more than 71K people working round-the-clock in 1944, building battleships and aircraft carriers. The Navy shut it down in 1966 and transferred the property to NYC.

—Kevin McCauley