

Opening Remarks  
**PCNY Looks at Sunday**  
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**PARADE – Fran Carpentier, Senior Editor**

I just want to start out by saying that Jack makes more money than Colleen and I do combined. But I can accept that. And I just know that I owe everyone in this room a phone call or a reply to an email and I really apologize for that.

I have voluminous notes because I went to Catholic school and I feel that I have to have something in front of me and it's why I do well in a corporate environment because I'm still motivated by fear. So let me go.

I want to feel that everyone knows what *PARADE* is, but looking around this room I see a lot of young people and that sometimes makes me a little concerned because if they've grown up in New York they're not as familiar with *PARADE* and certainly if they're in this business they need to be. So I'm going to do this little 45 second commercial. *PARADE* is distributed in 345 newspapers across the country. We're in the A-list of papers, if you will, the leading papers in each market including the *WASHINGTON POST*, the *CHICAGO TRIBUNE*, the *SAINT LOUIS POST-DISPATCH*, *NEWSDAY* and most recently as of July 4<sup>th</sup> the *NEW YORK POST*. Now, just to kind of prove to you the appeal of *PARADE*, what you probably don't realize is that eight of those leading newspapers including the *WASHINGTON POST*, *CHICAGO TRIB*, *BOSTON GLOBE*, *KANSAS CITY STAR*, *HOUSTON CHRONICLE*, *LA TIMES*, *SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE*, and the *SEATTLE TIMES* also distribute their own Sunday newspaper. So that means that the newspaper publishers, who are by definition watching the bottom line and are the ultimate bean counters, if they're putting out money to carry *PARADE* and spending lots of money on the rest of their magazine, the proof in the pudding is that their readers want *PARADE*. Bottom line, we go into 36 million homes where we reach 75 million readers every Sunday. That's like the Super Bowl in print. What does this all mean to you? First and foremost: the clients, the causes, the products you are pitching must be newsworthy and, as Jack said, national in scope. That said, if your client is local, if there's some sort of local cause going on, what I would challenge you to do is think does it have national application? If some woman started some group for homeless kids in your community, does it have national application? Could it be something that can be replicated? So that's another way you might try to think or expand your pitch.

I think all of us would say we've heard it all. The ideas behind your pitch should be pertinent and fresh. And I really take off my hat to you. I can't imagine how hard it has to be for you to come in and have to be perky and make these phone calls and we're all so rude because we're all so busy. I mean Colleen's running the whole goddamn newspaper. Jack's just vacationing in Fire Island every other weekend he told us. (Jack says something) Oh, I know you are! What is not pertinent and fresh and forgive me if I'm insulting anyone here, this may have been a year or two ago, the Bounty Paper Towel Survey on Household Bacteria - they call me up and they say, "Well we can show you" maybe it wasn't a towel, maybe it was a sponge, "The sponge has bacteria!" And I thought it's just too obvious a plug. We're not going to deliver that to our readers. So that's hard for you guys. Oh, and I got, swear to God, two calls in the last 10 days, this

woman, and I'm not callous, this had to do with raising awareness of breast cancer. She's making a global trek. And I thought, "This poor woman, it's enough that she's sick she's walking across the world?" And I think that thought, this sounds terrible, in the last decade so many people, it started with FORREST GUMP, have run across the country and everyone's biking and they're blind and they're climbing mountains. And I don't mean to sound callous, but these gallant survivor-type things, I just felt bad for the PR person. I said, "I really thank you but we've kind of done that."

Anyway, there should always be some news there or a news peg. Remember, *PARADE* is a newspaper magazine. In addition to news, when you're pitching *PARADE* your ideas can be oriented to trends, personalities in entertainment, health, science, technology, certainly food, lifestyle, the home, family and environmental issues. The best way to say that may be that the world is your oyster and I never knew what that meant, because I, whatever, I don't know what it means.

I would say that you have to really be responsible when you contact us and what I mean by that is appearing in *PARADE* is a tremendous opportunity for your client and therefore for you. I can guarantee you I think more people have gotten promotions and raises because they managed to get a placement in *PARADE*, I know that to be true. From our side of the desk we're always mindful of the responsibility we have to our readers to report stuff, for lack of a better word, that is honest, accurate and interesting. We never lose sight of our reader when making a decision - the all-important "what's-in-it-for-me" factor - because in the end that's what readers, that's what people care about, what's in it for me? How will this news or product or book or exercise program or cause benefit me or my family or my friends? We like to remind writers and literary agents and publishers that even though we reach 75 million Americans every week we never forget that we are read by one person at a time.

When you're getting ready to pitch, figure out whether what you're pitching is a story or an item because we do have places where your items can fit. And I'm actually going to give you an address book at the end of this, unless everyone falls asleep. What's the difference between a story and an item - we're back to Journalism 1. I would say don't pitch a story on a new drug for arthritis or this revolutionary new diet pill. That is a good story but it's a daily newspaper story. You have to keep in mind that production-wise we have a four week lead time. So before we can ever run anything on this, news of your item or story is going to have appeared in the daily papers, on the wire services, on the evening news and on radio. For a magazine, that kind of news break is an item, the sort of information that is likely to appear in a column. But I would also tell you to bear in mind there is no breakthrough that is not part of an ongoing story. So if you do have a client like I'm describing what you need to do is say, "well is there controversy about this (let's say) drug in the medical establishment? Is the medical community divided? Has some individual or family in your community been hurt by this?" Obviously this talks about developing your campaign and I apologize if this sounds like PR 101. The bottom line when approaching *PARADE* is that we want real people talking about real things, interesting things, and I'm sad to say this does not mean the new CEO of the top pharmaceutical company or the new bursar at the Bronx Community College which I know some of you have to publicize in order to bring home a paycheck and again I really take my hat off to you.

I would say be discerning and selective. Don't be so self-serving. What I sometimes say to people, although with a smile in my voice, I say, "You know what, look, let's really talk about this because I have a feeling that if this appears in *PARADE*, I'm doing a lot more for your client than I'm doing for my reader." And there's the challenge, that's why you're making the big bucks. There's a little line I use, if I'm not talking to publicity groups I'm talking to writers groups and I heard a line from years ago, from before Colleen was born, from an editor at the *READER'S DIGEST* and he said, "The real key is to take the incidental and make it universal," and I just loved that. I wish someone would needlepoint it for me. A shorthand way of saying that is when you approach us don't make me have to work so hard. I cannot tell you how many times someone has pitched me and I've said to the publicist, "You know, that is really a good idea. It's not right for *PARADE*, that's a *GOOD DAY NEW YORK* story. Call them up, they'll do a segment." Or "It's not gonna work for me, blah-blah-blah, turn it around and try *REDBOOK* or try this one," and I swear it's been placed. I get a lot of flowers when that happens.

It's a good idea to sort of personalize your pitch whenever possible so once you get our attention if things are going to work out let us know what experts, authorities, victims you can put us in touch with. Can you help us to arrange a photo shoot? And I think that what you're really going for is that even if your good efforts don't win you a placement, they will win our attentions and they will start a relationship. And even better, it will help to begin a real dialogue between you the publicists and us the editors at *PARADE*. And I think that's really the best of all possible worlds because I firmly believe that you the publicists and us the editors are smarter when we work together than either of us is when we work alone.

Various and sundry points: We're a newspaper magazine. Timeliness and accuracy are essential. *PARADE* follows newspaper ethics, for example: editors and the writers who freelance for *PARADE* are not allowed to accept press trips. In fact, we pay all authors' expenses, anything incurred in writing a story. Press rates are allowed, of course. This is something that happens with travel companies or food companies that always want to send you to Guam to watch the coffee beans growing. Or France, I turned down so many trips to wineries it breaks my heart. But on the other hand, we can always do lunch! And then we can just talk about everybody in the industry. I love that.

How to pitch: Do not phone. You know the real truth? The truth is that's how things often get done, you know? The theory is don't phone, the reality is if you don't phone we're just going to lose all the stuff that you sent us. Anyway, in the end it's all about relationships. I'll make more comments about that later. But if you do phone and if you manage to get through keep in mind that your phone pitch is your real calling card. Be succinct, don't meander through. People call me and it's like, have they even thought this idea through yet? It's usually when someone's really young and you're thinking, "How did this person get this job?" And we don't mean to be nasty but we're *so* busy. And underappreciated. No.

Obviously, if there's a timeliness issue, submit it so we have enough time to evaluate it. Just like Jack said, production-wise it's a one month lead time. For a story you really should come to us no less than two, certainly three months ahead.

I guess the bottom line is, think about the best way to tell your client's story to the particular magazine to which you're pitching. And something I would like to do, if Peter

would let us, is when we're done and we're doing the Q & A's, if anybody has a client or maybe you don't have to name the name but if you toss it out each of us might describe how we would handle it. I do that with writers' groups sometimes which is kind of fun and we see how each magazine would develop the idea. And then lunch really becomes a tax deduction if it works out.

Anyway, I will tell you this, that when all is said and done there are a handful of publicists, it's really just a handful, whose calls I always take. I really welcome them and I'm always willing to work with these people. And I think that's what you are really aiming for, to establish those sorts of relationships. And I think like any other relationship they develop over time, they involve trust and mutual respect and dependability. And I really hope that we all can develop that kind of relationship.

Now, what can you expect from *PARADE*? You know that old line about real estate, "location, location, location", *PARADE* is the most valuable real estate in the business. We move our readers to action and they trust us. They love *PARADE*, they know it, they trust us in terms of purchasing dollars. A book or a product or a cause that appears in *PARADE* benefits tremendously. Any book cited in *PARADE* is like the top of the bestseller list at Amazon.com and the *NEW YORK TIMES*. Just some examples from some of the special issues I oversee, I had this soybean product two years ago in the "Live Longer, Better, Wiser" issue and I'm thinking, "Should I put this in? Yeah, well, I'll put it in. Alright, health conscious people." Melissa's got 400,000 web hits that day. I had another small food company in my "What America Eats" issue in November, buffalo meat, they got 193,000 hits, many, many orders. The owner of the company called me and said, "You know what, I'm in the black. You've made my company viable. Thank you." Doesn't matter how big or small, a photo like that, caption of three lines, people will find it. The response, I promise you, will knock your socks off. We've been influential in changing federal legislation, it's quite something. As an example, the "Intelligence Report" column, always telling people to contact the "Intelligence Report" column, in May of 1992 there was a really short item on Gloria Steinem, they were going to come up with something called "Take Your Daughters to Work Day." That became a national phenomenon that's still going strong. That's the kind of impact we have.

OK, how to pitch. This is when you should take notes. Nowadays, snail mail vs. email – the truth is every editor at *PARADE* has his or her own preference, I think snail mail is becoming less and less popular. Being of a certain age I like paper. I like something tangible, my office is a firetrap, I can't even get in it because I look at everything that comes to me. Invariably if I'm interested I'll tell you to email it to me anyway. At *PARADE* the formula is it's the person's firstname\_lastname@parade.com, real easy. Everyone has advised me to tell you to put in a real clear subject line. Don't be cute, don't be coy, don't put "Hi there, how ya doin' Fran?" People do that because we all get to be friendly. And also, if it's a little obscure we all think it's SPAM. I have, good thing my bosses aren't here, I have 1700 unopened emails. I'm sure I'm the one screwing up the Condé Nast website or something, whatever that's called. But you've got to be smart, you've got to be efficient. For the "Intelligence Report", the woman who writes that, the correspondent is Lyric Wallwork Winnick, she should change her name, what could I tell you, she's nuts. If you want to get in touch with her she works out of her home in Chevy Chase, MD, her email is [intelligence\\_report@parade.com](mailto:intelligence_report@parade.com). Lyric was especially clear about that, make sure you give her a good subject box. This is what she's

looking for: she says that “Intelligence Report” is very consumer-oriented, she also promises that if the item is not right for “Intelligence” she will forward it to one of her colleagues who she thinks might cover it. And I can tell you I do that all the time, a lot of you probably know that I’m like, “OK, send it to me!” I like to look at everything, I think there is an idea everywhere so I’m good about forwarding it to my colleagues. Lyric is interested in consumer help news, any kind of screenings, medical screenings, celebrity stuff provided the celebrity is involved with some issue or cause or doing something unique like a year or two ago she reported on, like, the *Sex and the City* girls were donating their shoes to someplace or other. She will mention, I won’t say review, nonfiction books, some history and current events. And with all due respect to what I said about the Bounty towels or sponges, Lyric does like surveys. Another plus, she said, is that if there’s no time limit on the information because as Jack and Colleen will tell you sometimes you’ve got odd space to fill, it depends on what’s going on with the ads, so if there’s something she’ll be ready to plug it in. She also said that she likes stuff that’s out there that doesn’t get a fair hearing or that’s ignored. She tries to pick up on the stories that are overlooked. (Unintelligible comment from moderator Peter Himler) Absolutely. Sure. Can I just announce that we are going to be launching a new column in the Fall called “Parade Picks”, all items involved with home entertainment, movies, books, CD’s DVD’s and I’ll tell you about that later.