

Franklin, B., Hogan, M., Langley, Q., Mosdell, N., & Pill, E. (2009). *Key concepts in public relations*. London: Sage.

Reviewed by: [Richard Stanton](#)

A few years ago, in the introduction to the *New Granta Book of The American Short Story*, editor and distinguished author Richard Ford (2007, p. vii) wrote "short stories by nature are daring little instruments and almost always represent commensurate daring in their makers. [...] short stories want to give us something big but want to do it in precious little time and space". I agree. But the short story genre, like poetry, has suffered from a reduced popular interest in recent years due to a number of factors.

While it may not be particularly poetic (though the 'key messages' entry could almost be imagined as part of Richard Brautigan's *In Watermelon Sugar* (The Esquire Treasury--Gingrich, 1954)) this edited volume is something to be dipped into and out of as the mood prevails.

In its 253 pages it offers a rich selection of short stories that together, make up the field of public relations. Short stories though, are not meant to be squirreled away in the mind of the reader; they are best shared and expanded in the telling.

So it was that I shared two of the stories with my corporate communication strategy masters students at the University of Sydney towards the end of the first semester 2010 to get a feel for how they might engage, given that the introduction, while providing a UK-centric view of the field, expressed limited ambition for the work.

My class had spent the semester immersed in corporate strategy selection and were wrestling with the idea that Leon Mayhew's *New Public* (1997) somehow or other weaved itself into the fabric of corporate existence.

References:

Brautigan, R. (1968). *In watermelon sugar*. New York: Dell.

Ford, R. (2007). *The new Granta book of the American short story*. London: Granta Books.

Gingrich, A. (1954). *The "Esquire" treasury: The best of twenty years of "Esquire", fact, fiction and laughter*. London: Heinemann.

Mayhew, L. H. (1997). *The new public: Professional communication and the means of social influence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Contributor biography: *Dr Richard Stanton is director of the graduate program in public relations at The University of Sydney. He is the author of a number of books and book chapters on public relations and journalism. He is the editor of Political Communication Report, a joint online publication of the International Communication Association and the American Political Science Association. He is a regular media commentator and his Twitter name is silvermullet.*