PUBLIC DIPLOMACY’S UNDEFINED ROLE: POLICIES AND THEMES SHAPING A NEW PARADIGM

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By

Danielle M. Foster, B.A.

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Mentor: Nicholas Palarino, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Public diplomacy is a key part of a nation-states survival and in the United States the subject is as old as the country. It is a multi-faceted field of practice and study employing efforts ranging from long-term goals of building mutual understanding around the world to short-term strategies such as countering immediate threats from violent extremism. Three categories of policies are presented in this thesis to develop a new paradigm for understanding public diplomacy efforts highlighting the various types of policies including: near-term, forward-looking and long-term policies.

The thesis proposes that most U.S. public diplomacy efforts in the 21st century have been focused on near-term efforts driven by four underlying public diplomacy themes: ideology and foreign policy; organizational politics; competitive pressures from rivalry; and leadership personalities and positions of influence. These themes have shaped the ideology, style, doctrines, perceptions, budgets, timeframes and organizational structures of public diplomacy.

The new paradigm for categorizing public diplomacy provides a framework for identifying how the four themes influence policy decisions that reflect either near-term, forward-looking or long-term goals. Based on the historical roots, practical implementation
and mandates of public diplomacy, the four themes illustrate that the structure and role of public diplomacy has been focused on near-term goals. By identifying and exploring major themes influencing public diplomacy, it is apparent each theme is primarily tied to near-term foreign policy driven by wartime priorities, presidential agendas and rapid responses to current events.

As the new administration looks at reforms in foreign policy, a priority should be providing leadership on clear and consistent roles for public diplomacy within the foreign policy realm. Without a tangible understanding of the role long-term public diplomacy efforts play in foreign policy, it will remain on the fringes of foreign affairs.

While military might is critical to the security of our nation, the challenges of the 21st century cannot be met with hard power alone. As the U.S. seeks to enhance its global power and build a more peaceful world, the maintenance of hard power must be coupled with an increase in the long-term soft power tools of public diplomacy.
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Although the term “public diplomacy” was not coined until 1965, the practice of public diplomacy is as old as the United States. Broadly defined as the “influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies,” public diplomacy is a key part of a nation-states survival (United States Information Agency Alumni Association 2008, “What is Public Diplomacy?”). The Founding Fathers of the U.S. were subject to the influence of public opinion and understood that they needed to appeal to the minds of decision-makers and publics abroad in order to rally support for an unprecedented war against Britain’s Empire. Author J. Michael Waller points out that communication with international publics during the American Revolution was critical to building support from “elements within the British Empire and among Britain’s European rivals” (Waller 2006, 1). Early forms of public diplomacy took shape as information operations employed during the American Revolution and served to mobilize a global coalition of supporters for American independence and democracy (Waller 2006, 1).

While early public diplomacy was primarily motivated by winning the American Revolution it continued to be recognized and reflected in the make-up of early diplomacy efforts. When Thomas Jefferson served as U.S. Secretary of State he recognized the importance of communication and appointed a messenger to serve as one of only six members of his staff. While history illustrates an early recognition of the importance of communication, the term “public diplomacy” reflects a relatively new field of practice and
study. Public diplomacy has historically been an intuitive function for the U.S. Department of State which serves as America’s voice and face abroad through overseas embassies, ambassadors and Foreign Service Nationals. At the height of the Cold War public diplomacy became a recognizable field because it differentiated diplomacy efforts and practitioners from propaganda activities.

The end of the Cold War was accompanied by a downsizing of U.S. public diplomacy efforts that left the U.S. unprepared for the new challenges of the 21st century. The events of September 11th and the subsequent “War on Terror” highlighted the need for increased mutual understanding around the world and elevated the importance of public diplomacy. Joshua Fouts, former director of the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy, notes that “successful public diplomacy can help to make a country not just more respected but more admired and liked” (Fouts 2006, 51). Since September 11th, scholars and practitioners have conducted over six comprehensive studies on public diplomacy and cite the need for an updated approach in the 21st century. The prevailing schools of thought in international relations, political science and communication have shed light into the necessity of public diplomacy. However, existing theories and historical research have not produced a working theory or model for categorizing and understanding various types of public diplomacy efforts. Public diplomacy is multi-faceted and employs efforts that range from long-term goals of building mutual understanding around the world to short-term strategies such as countering immediate threats from violent extremism. In order to fully understand the role of public diplomacy in foreign affairs, we must understand the different types of activities under the umbrella of public diplomacy. This
chapter identifies four existing communication and international relations-based theories and builds on relevant components to develop a new paradigm for understanding public diplomacy activities.

**Relevant Theorists**

Public diplomacy activities are wedded to communication and international affairs. The initial intent of early public diplomacy activities was to communicate with foreign publics in an attempt to influence their opinions, beliefs and actions during times of war. This link to public diplomacy makes communication and international relations theories helpful to constructing an analytical framework for understanding the role of public diplomacy in foreign policy.

Within international relations theory, critical theorist, Jurgen Habermas, of the Frankfort School, identifies two distinctly different types of actions in communication: 1) communication which is intended to increase mutual understanding; and 2) communication which is intended to persuade or co-opt. Both of these forms of communication are used in foreign policy and according to Habermas are distinctly different due to the underlying motives and intentions which drive them. The intention behind communication is critical to Habermas because he contends that “communicative action,” which focuses on non-manipulative communication and language that builds mutual understanding, is preferable to persuasive communication because it facilitates higher levels of freedom by “binding norms through speech and debate” (Griffiths 2007, 51). Within public diplomacy policy, the Fulbright-Hayes Act, which seeks to build mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries, is an example of Habermas’ concept of discourse communication.
Habermas contends that discourse communication is important because building mutual understanding produces “actions compatible with those understandings” (Gregory 2005, 9). The ability to influence not only attitudes about the U.S. but also action is critical to the success of U.S. public diplomacy.

Habermas recognized the U.S. faces new challenges to establishing democracy on a global scale because it is difficult to communicate universal values that all cultures identify with. He notes that for cosmopolitan democracy to be successful it must “link people and cultures that do not have a common language, common symbols, or the shared history that have underpinned nation-states for the past two centuries” (Griffiths 2007, 48). As the geopolitical landscape changes in the 21st century, practitioners will increasingly find that public diplomacy efforts need to provide these missing linkages.

While public diplomacy policies can be viewed through the lens of communicative action because they employ language as a tool for influencing behavior, further research is needed to directly apply communication theory to public diplomacy efforts. Communication and international relations theories provide a foundation for understanding the different types of communication practitioners employ. However, scholars have noted that theories such as Habermas’ “communicative action” are not enough for us to understand the various dimensions of interaction and communication styles in public diplomacy. For example, communications scholar Peter Dahlgren, argues that Habermas’ theory of “communicative action,” favors collaboration and “non-manipulative communication,” over strategic and persuasive communication which Habermas calls “strategic action or instrumental rationality” (Griffith 2007, 52). Habermas’ theory focuses
on this specific area of communication and leaves much room open for other theorists to build upon and identify categories of communication.

Within the field of international relations, several other theories apply to public diplomacy. International relations scholar, Joseph Nye, complements the foundation provided by Habermas by specifically linking theoretical concepts of power to public diplomacy. Nye contends public diplomacy is a key part of increasing a nations “soft power,” which can be understood as the attractiveness of a country’s “culture, political ideals, and policies” (Nye 2004, 3). Public diplomacy efforts such as Voice of America, which broadcasts news and U.S. culture around the world, or international people to people exchanges such as the Fulbright program, often enhance “soft power,” by highlighting the attractiveness of U.S. cultural, political and educational capital.

Habermas’ concept of communicative action overlaps with Nye’s concept of three dimensions of public diplomacy in that they both identify key types of communication and differentiate between strategic communication and building mutual understanding. Unlike Habermas, Nye directly applies communication to public diplomacy and identifies three “dimensions” of public diplomacy: 1) “daily communication,” the day to day articulation of foreign policy; 2) “strategic communication,” development of a simple theme; and 3) “Development of lasting relationships,” through efforts such as scholarship, exchanges, etc. (Nye 2004, 107). Nye’s identification of these different dimensions of communication in public diplomacy provide the foundation for developing a lens through which to view the way the U.S. communicates with the rest of the world.
At the core of both Nye and Habermas’ differentiation of communication is a key debate on the function of public diplomacy: should public diplomacy efforts serve 1) a strategic policy function; 2) as a mouthpiece within the foreign affairs apparatus; or 3) as a tool to build mutual understanding. Both Nye and Habermas shed light on this debate by distinguishing between communication that is intended to increase mutual understanding and that which is intended to persuade or coerce. By acknowledging that there are differences in the way the U.S. communicates with international publics these theories provide a basis for developing a new paradigm which places public diplomacy activities into three main categories.

In addition to the foundation laid by Habermas and Nye, theories on public opinion and information as an element of power are helpful to understanding the different functions of public diplomacy. Theorists John Dewey and Walter Lippmann provide relevant insight into public diplomacy through their writings on public opinion, participatory democracy and mass media. For example, John Dewey’s concept of discourse theory is linked to public diplomacy policies that “emphasize engagement and the exchange of people and ideas” (Gregory 2005, 10). Dewey’s focus on the importance of communication and dialog in a participatory democracy sparked Habermas’ belief in the effectiveness of non-manipulative communication in expanding democracy. Dewey believed the linchpin of successful democracy rested in actively engaged citizens participating in the political process through communication and dialog. This concept of public and participatory democracy falls in line with public diplomacy efforts such as educational and cultural exchanges.
Dewey, similar to Nye and Habermas, distinguishes between manipulative communication and communication which seeks to build dialogue and understanding. Within these types of communication, Dewey cites strategic communication, “communication that advances interest-based calculations,” as less relevant to a participatory democracy. Dewey’s communication preference has been cited by some scholars as being narrowly focused and less relevant to practical elements of communication that emphasize “advocacy, persuasion, policies and strategic communication campaigns” (Gregory 2005, 10). Dewey, Habermas and Nye’s emphasis on the intention behind communication lays a foundation for developing a new paradigm for public diplomacy.

All three theorists can be applied to public diplomacy because they draw a clear distinction between the motives, intentions and spirit of public communication. While the first three theorists suggest a nation’s focus should be on building mutual understanding, Walter Lippmann, takes a pragmatic approach to communication and focuses on targeted communication in the form of propaganda and psychological warfare. Lippmann argues that propaganda cannot be divorced from politics because people’s actions are influenced by their internal perception and imagery which is “based not on direct and certain knowledge, but on pictures made by himself or given to him” (Lippmann 1922, 25). The focus of Lippmann’s communication theory is advocacy, persuasion and strategic campaigns which he believes are critical to shaping the mental filters that influence public opinion.
Lippmann’s concept of communication is important because it provides insight into another category of communication and highlights a different approach to public diplomacy. The concept of strategic communication, the combination of message and action, is widely used in public diplomacy efforts initiated by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). An example of DOD’s use of strategic communication is the creation of AFRICOM, which serves the objective of increasing global security through engaging in public diplomacy on the behalf of the U.S. within Africa. The creation of AFRICOM reflects Nye’s concept of “smart power” which seeks to combine elements of hard and soft power to achieve foreign policy goals.

Critics of Dewy and Habermas argue that Lippmann’s concept of strategic communication is more practical than mutual understanding based communication because it accounts for the way “we make sense of a complex, confusing external world” (Gregory 2005, 12). As the global village increasingly bombards people and cultures with a plethora of messages, public diplomacy efforts must become more targeted, credible and aimed at commonalities if it is to generate both positive opinion and positive behaviors towards the U.S.

While communication and international relations theories provide a basis for analyzing some elements of public diplomacy, there has not been a complete theory developed to help understand the underlying factors that influence public diplomacy policies. In order to gain additional insight into these factors, a new paradigm for public diplomacy is needed.
Towards a New Paradigm

Recent works by scholars and practitioners have provided historical accounts of the mission, institution and practice of public diplomacy and identify the need for further research that explains underlying influences of public diplomacy. This section seeks to expand upon historical research, communication and international relations-based theory to create a new paradigm for categorizing public diplomacy efforts. The new paradigm seeks to help us understand public diplomacy policies by identifying three categories of policies: 1) Near-term; 2) Forward-looking; and 3) Long-term. These categories are based on an analysis of efforts primarily put forth by key U.S. government agencies such as the U.S. Department of State.

Near-term (NT) Efforts This category represents public diplomacy policies that are driven by pragmatic foreign policy goals and seek to promote the immediate priorities of U.S. foreign policy in a rapidly changing political environment. These public diplomacy policies seek to inform, promote and convince the world of the legitimacy of the U.S. foreign policy agenda and often serve as an immediate outlet for rapid response to international events. Near-term policy is reflective of Nye’s definition of daily communications and is characterized by immediate communication that explains the domestic and foreign policy decisions of the U.S.

Near-term policies, by definition, respond to shifts in the geopolitical landscape and are reactive as opposed to proactive policies. These policies reflect the priorities of an administration or political environment and are most effective when the message is seen as credible and the policy position is viewed as legitimate. The articulation of U.S. foreign
policy is a critical element of public diplomacy because it sets the tone for U.S. interactions with the rest of the world. Near-term policies are inherently linked to foreign policy and are reliant on the standing and international perception of U.S. foreign policy. When U.S. foreign policy is perceived as consistent with universal values the U.S. supports and as having genuine moral authority it serves as an effective tool of public diplomacy. However, when foreign policies are viewed as illegitimate, positive public opinion of the U.S. government declines and hurts U.S. political capital and by extension, U.S. soft power. Nye’s example of near-term public diplomacy efforts is daily communications, which serves to explain “the context of domestic and foreign policy decisions” (Nye 2004, 107). Nye argues that soft and hard power combined create smart power, which cannot be achieved through short-term policies alone, but rather through long-term policies and strategic public diplomacy efforts.

Near-term public diplomacy policies employ Lippmann’s concept of strategic communication because they are rooted in pragmatism and focus on public diplomacy efforts that are “goal oriented, driven by interest-based preferences and decisions and linked to power and the market” (Gregory 2005, 12). In addition, near-term policies typically employ strategic communication to meet pragmatic goals. For example, in 2007, the State Department’s Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy, Karen Hughes, announced the first formal strategic plan for public diplomacy. The second strategic goal in the plan was to isolate and marginalize violent extremism. This goal reflects the priorities of the administration and the political landscape of the “War on Terror.” These types of policies
fall under the near-term category because they focus on specific priorities and goals of an administration.

Near-term policies are at the frontline of rapidly responding to international affairs and stir up a fundamental debate: should public diplomacy serve to promote/address near-term policy goals or long-term objectives of building relationships? Should public diplomacy represent the broader interests of a country or the imperatives of an incumbent president? The following chapters will explore the historical influences on public diplomacy and shed light on the role of public diplomacy in foreign policy.

**Forward-looking Efforts** are categorized as policies driven by U.S. political values and attempt to align fundamental values and beliefs with foreign policy priorities. Forward-looking public diplomacy policies reflect elements of the concept of strategic communication and are longer in duration than near-term policies. These policies typically send a message of the overall purpose of public diplomacy in a nation-state’s foreign affairs. These policies are characterized, in part, by Joseph Nye’s concept of strategic communication in that these public diplomacy efforts develop “a set of simple themes much as political or advertising campaigns do” (Nye 2004, 108). Nye notes that strategic communication functions like a campaign because it reinforces a central set of themes and occurs “over the course of a year to brand central themes, or to advance a particular government policy” (Nye 108). An example of forward looking policy is the U.S. Department of State’s Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Jim Glassman’s focus on a targeted campaign of the “War of Ideas.” This initiative, launched in June of 2008, is specific and aims to focus on counterterrorism.
Glassman notes that:

. . . unlike traditional functions of public diplomacy like education and cultural exchanges, the aim of the war of ideas is not to persuade foreign populations to adopt more favorable views of the United States and its policies. Instead, the war of ideas tries to ensure that negative sentiments and day-to-day grievances toward the U.S. and its allies do not manifest themselves in the form of violent extremism. (Glassman 2008)

This public diplomacy policy reflects forward-looking policy because the initiative is a clear, targeted message, that is carried out over the course of Undersecretary Glassman’s political appointment. As the U.S. seeks to counter terrorism through public diplomacy, Habermas’ concept of communicative action is particularly relevant for forward-looking and mutual understanding-based policies because it identifies the challenge of spreading democracy across the globe and links its success to an ability to increase dialogue and mutual understanding based policies. Forward-looking policies differ from near-term policies in that they operate for a specified amount of time and are pre-meditated. A majority of U.S. public diplomacy efforts focus on the rhetoric and the delivery of a policy message and hence fall under the category of forward-looking efforts.

**Long-term Efforts** are categorized as public diplomacy that focuses on developing mutual understanding by harnessing U.S. cultural resources to increase the nation’s attractiveness to others. These policies are characterized by action in the form of people to people exchanges of art, education, science and culture. An example of long-term policy includes educational and cultural exchange programs such as the Fulbright Scholarship, the International Visitor Leadership program and the Jazz Ambassadors program. Nye gives examples of long-term policies as the “development of lasting relationships with key
individuals, over many years through scholarships, exchanges, training, seminars, conferences and access to media channels” (Nye 2004, 109). Actions or in Habermas’ case “communicative action” is critical to public diplomacy policies because it distinguishes between communication that is intended to build mutual understanding from that which is intended to coerce or co-opt. These policies employ the concept of discourse communication because they incorporate the “social collective and their cultures to share meaning and understanding.” by listening and building a sphere where “diverse voices can be heard” (Griffiths 2007, 52-53).

Scholars argue long-term policies such as exchanges are critical to public diplomacy because they build mutual understanding which is believed to shape behavior. Long-term policies that build mutual understanding and dialogue are also linked to achieving pragmatic goals. Author Bruce Gregory notes that exchanges, a key long-term policy, achieve a variety of second order goals such as:

. . . reduction of tensions and negative attitudes toward the U.S., eliminate the fertile ground that terrorist recruiters exploit, influence the next generation of leaders, communicate freedom and democracy, justice and opportunity, diversity and tolerance, combat anti-Americanism and misperceptions that threaten U.S. security. (Gregory 2005, 13)

Long-term policies serve both pragmatic and altruistic goals in that they function to build mutual understanding and promote support for democratic values. In November 2007, U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates noted the need for the U.S. to increase its soft power. He acknowledged that the U.S.:

Must focus our energies beyond the guns and steel of the military, beyond just our brave soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen. We must also focus our energies on the
Gates focus on soft power is telling of the role that public diplomacy plays in foreign affairs. Long-term policies reinforce that public diplomacy is not merely a mouthpiece for foreign policy but rather a channel for increasing dialogue and understanding. Despite the pragmatic purposes of long-term policies such as educational and cultural exchanges, critics of long-term mutual understanding policies argue that public diplomacy should focus more on promoting ideals over developing dialog.

These three categories of public diplomacy efforts provide a critical lens for identifying underlying values, assumptions and trends. By categorizing the major types of activities employed by public diplomacy, it becomes evident that it is a multi-faceted field with competing priorities, timeframes and goals. Understanding the underlying values and assumptions that drive public diplomacy will help to provide a more thorough lens to analyze public diplomacy in the 21st century.

Applying the Paradigm to Four Themes in Public Diplomacy

This thesis proposes that most U.S. public diplomacy efforts in the 21st century have been focused on near-term efforts that are driven by four underlying themes in public diplomacy: 1) ideology and foreign policy; 2) organizational politics; 3) competitive pressures from rivalry; and 4) leadership personalities and positions of influence. These underlying themes have shaped the ideology, style, doctrines, perceptions, budgets, time horizons and organizational structures of U.S. public diplomacy. Because public diplomacy
is carried out for interest and value based reasons, we must identify the themes that shape the role of public diplomacy in order to understand its capacity and limitations.

The history, mission and practice of U.S. public diplomacy efforts serve as a basis for identifying the four major themes that are believed to influence public diplomacy policies. The new paradigm for public diplomacy provides an analytical framework that helps to categorize public diplomacy activities. The paradigm will be used to identify the extent to which the four themes influence public diplomacy policies that are: 1) near-term; 2) forward-looking; or 3) long-term. By highlighting three categorizations, the new paradigm allows public diplomacy policies to be identified as aligned with one of the three categories. All of these categories employ advocacy techniques which Nicholas Crull in *Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories* describes as “an actors attempt to manage the international environment by undertaking international communication activities to actively promote a particular policy, an idea or an actors general interests in the minds of a foreign public” (Crull 2008, 31-54). The new paradigm provides a distinction that will aid in identifying underlying values, trends and commonalities across the four themes. Understanding the core values and categories associated with public diplomacy policies will help forecast future public diplomacy efforts and provide insight into the areas that need to be adapted for the 21st century.
CHAPTER 2

THEME 1: IDEOLOGY AND FOREIGN POLICY

This chapter identifies the first underlying theme that has helped to shape U.S. public diplomacy. Chapters 2-5 identify four overarching themes in public diplomacy to determine if these themes influence public diplomacy policies that are focused on near-term, forward-looking or long-term priorities.

Just as elections, war, technology and natural disasters change the course of foreign affairs and politics, they also change and influence the attention given to public diplomacy. Some scholars argue public diplomacy is only as good as a nation’s foreign policy. When U.S. foreign policy is unpopular, it helps to know what type of public diplomacy policy is most effective. To understand the bandwidth and limits of public diplomacy efforts, the underlying values and assumptions that promoted the rise of public diplomacy as a key foreign policy tool must be examined. As the themes that have shaped public diplomacy begin to be explored, the roots of public diplomacy can be traced back to fundamental American beliefs about the role of the U.S. in the world. This chapter will explore these beliefs and seek to provide a foundation for understanding the influences that have driven U.S. foreign policy and public diplomacy.

_Ideology and Foreign Policy_

In understanding the influence behind contemporary U.S. public diplomacy policies, one must look at the powerful thread of ideology that has shaped the American Empire in the 20th century. The U.S. rose from thirteen colonies to an American Empire partially under an ideology that has championed Americanization through the promotion of
U.S. standards of democracy, justice and liberty. These underpinning values shape U.S. foreign policy and highlight the historical significance of ideology and its connection to public diplomacy.

American history and rhetoric point to two distinct ideologies deeply ingrained in U.S. foreign policy: democracy and U.S. visions of national greatness known as American exceptionalism. In, *American Exceptionalism and US Foreign Policy*, author Siobhan McEvoy-Levy points out that the idea of American exceptionalism and national greatness implies “the United States’ moral superiority as well as the uniqueness of its origins, political system, social organization and values and cultural and religious characteristics” (McEvoy-Levy 2001, 23). U.S. Presidents from both political parties, including Ronald Reagan and Barack Obama, frequently speak of the U.S. responsibility to uphold its stature in the world as a “city on the hill” which shines as a beacon of hope around the world.

This frequently cited rhetoric on America’s role in the world was ingrained into the American ideal long before the achievement of American independence. The concept of a “city on the hill” was first introduced by Puritan leader John Winthrop during a sermon to settlers in 1630. He stated, “wee shall be as a citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are upon us” (Winthrop 1997, 47). In Winthrop’s view, the colonies in America were destined for greatness and blessed with a wealth of resources, the promise of liberty and a responsibility to set an example for the rest of the world. This fundamental ideology was later illustrated for the masses by Thomas Paine who mobilized the public in 1776 with his influential pamphlet, *Common Sense*. In it he wrote, “we have it in our power to begin the world all over again” (Paine 2004, 19). As the American nation began to take shape, the
American people and leadership adopted this call to national greatness as a key component of U.S. foreign policy.

The idea of American national greatness has been a long-lasting and powerful motivator for foreign policy and US expansion. Businessmen and politicians used core American values, such as individualism, self-reliance and a pristine sense of right and wrong to promote overseas expansion. This rationale for U.S. involvement in other countries provided a natural segue into U.S. regional dominance. In, Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy, author Michael Hunt suggests that U.S. visions of national greatness is the most influential concept in understanding the rise of the American Empire and conversely the global perception of American hegemony. The U.S. vision of national greatness is a key ideology that has played out in public diplomacy because it shapes U.S. foreign policy by “defining the American future in terms of an active quest for national greatness closely coupled to the promotion of liberty” (Hunt 1988, 17).

This ideology has proved to be closely tied to public diplomacy because it is used in foreign policy rhetoric as a tool to “build sympathetic public ecologies, chiefly at home but also abroad, which enable the exercise of American power in a broader sense” (McEvoy-Levy 2001, 143). In order for the U.S. to conduct successful foreign policy, policy makers need to garner domestic support and do so principally through appealing to these deep rooted American values and ideology.

U.S. Ideology and the Monroe Doctrine

The initial focus of U.S. public diplomacy reflected a primarily pragmatic approach that grew out of both U.S. security concerns and deep rooted ideology. The use of U.S.
foreign policy ideology is exemplified in the rhetoric of the Monroe Doctrine. In his State of the Union Address to Congress in 1823, President James Monroe delivered a speech that would later become a major component of U.S. foreign policy known as the Monroe Doctrine. In his speech, Monroe noted that the United States “should consider any attempt [on the part of European powers] to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety” (Brooks 2000, 3). President Monroe’s internationalist approach was based on the assumption that in order to avoid American involvement in “quarrels of the Old World,” U.S. isolationism needed to be modified to include “America’s special interest in and responsibility for the hemisphere of the New World” (Brooks 2000, 3). President Monroe’s description of America’s role in the New World is a reflection of U.S. ideology dating back to Winthrop, Paine and the founding of the U.S.

The belief in American exceptionalism was an underlying value in the Monroe Doctrine which assumed that by separating Europe from America, an emphasis could be placed on “the existence of distinct American, and specifically U.S., interests” (Encarta 4). The Monroe Doctrine sought not only to quell security concerns but also to advance positive American values within the Western Hemisphere. President Monroe rejected the European political system of monarchy as detrimental to freedom and believed that the Monroe Doctrine would help to ensure that no American nation would adopt it (Monroe 1823).

While the Monroe Doctrine was visibly motivated by pragmatic security concerns, it was also a reflection of values and assumptions inherent in the ideology of U.S. foreign
policy. The rejection of European monarchy as a viable political system was tied to the perception that this system perpetuated conflict and instability. Implicit in this rejection was the conviction that more liberal forms of government could engender peace and stability. By encouraging the development of open, liberal political regimes in the Western Hemisphere, America would be creating a community of peace and prosperity. The Monroe Doctrine not only furthered American security, but sought to export the best of American products: democratic institutions, commerce and political stability. The Monroe Doctrine is rooted in American values which are a key component of public diplomacy efforts that aim to export American culture and the ideals of Western liberal values.

Since 1823, the Monroe Doctrine has provided the framework for future democracy promotion policies. Monroe’s shift away from isolationism was pivotal because it challenged the ingrained concept of early U.S. isolationism which championed a strong domestic agenda and shied away from meddling in foreign affairs. This early emphasis on democracy promotion and America’s role in the world has been a key motivator for public diplomacy policies.

While the Monroe Doctrine remained only a declaration of policy and was not affirmed by congressional legislation or international law, it is still a prominent part of 21st century foreign policy and has been cited as the catalyst for modern day democracy promotion initiatives. As evidenced by the Monroe Doctrine, the foundation being laid for U.S. foreign policy was motivated primarily by the pragmatic pursuit of security and secondly, by U.S. ideology rooted in the concept of American exceptionalism. Understanding these driving themes is critical because it highlights the existing foreign
policy duality between altruism (values) and pragmatism (strategy). Author McEvoy-Levy notes that “the chief significance of the recurrence of American exceptionalism in U.S. public diplomacy lies in how it can be both value and strategy at once and what this illustrates about the dynamic between normative and interest-based concerns in U.S. foreign policy” (McEvoy-Levy 2001, 143). The deep rooted ideology of American exceptionalism can be linked to many pragmatic policies because it allows policy makers to cite America’s responsibility to set an example for the rest of the world as a mandate for supporting internationalist foreign policies.

The theme of American exceptionalism has promoted a more operational emphasis on foreign policy and has been the catalyst for a number of forward-looking public diplomacy policies such as the rhetorical campaigns of President’s George H. Bush and William J. Clinton. For example, the Bush and Clinton administrations focused their public diplomacy on discrete near-term and forward-looking policy issues such as the Soviet coup, Persian Gulf or Presidential elections (McElvoy-Levy 2001 145). The underlying values inherent in the ideology of American exceptionalism are typically evoked to garner domestic support for U.S. foreign policy. U.S. values are automatically projected around the world primarily through foreign policies of the current administration and secondly through the public diplomacy efforts that seek to respond to and support those policies. Ideology is an ingrained part of U.S. foreign policy and by extension, a large part of public diplomacy efforts abroad.
Rhetoric of Expansion and Democracy Promotion

As the U.S. continued to become more globally engaged, Americans were confronted with “whether domestic liberty could flourish alongside an ambitious and strongly assertive foreign policy” (Hunt 1988, 17). These early concerns over the consequences of ideology began to manifest in the 20th century. As American leaders guided the country through a quest for continental dominion, they employed U.S. ideology but simultaneously undermined the authority of European powers, the Mexican government and a multitude of American Indians. The process of territorial expansion, dubbed by John O’ Sullivan as “Manifest Destiny,” provides an early glimpse into the use of liberty and national greatness as the rationale for U.S. expansion. Manifest Destiny was popular with U.S. policy makers but proved to be devastating for the American Indians who lost their lives, land and culture. Despite the casualties of the American Indians, the U.S. completion of Manifest Destiny was viewed as a great success by the American public.

After the fulfillment of Manifest Destiny, an 1890 census raised concerns about the closing of the American frontier which became known as the “myth of the West.” This myth was perpetuated by businessmen and politicians seeking to use American ideals for their own gain. By utilizing the “myth of the West” to resolve the clash between America's past values and a future where the American frontier seemed doomed to disappear, policy makers and businessmen played on the concerns of citizens in order to pursue overseas markets and political alliances. The rhetoric of expansion in the name of national greatness helped to quell isolationist tendencies and provoked a favorable response from the
American public. With this counter to the American tendency towards isolationism, the U.S. began to take on a global presence and consequently a global responsibility to promote democratic values abroad. In the process of making the world safe for democracy, the U.S. has in some cases, such as with Manifest Destiny, instituted aggressive foreign policies in the name of ideology.

*Ideology and Cold War Policy*

Some scholars argue that by the 20th century, U.S. policy makers were convinced national greatness depended on making the world safe for democracy. With this new expansion abroad came a new need to successfully communicate U.S. foreign policy and ideology. This was an early catalyst for public diplomacy efforts that would take shape in the 20th century. Following the end of the Cold War, the world was no longer aligned along the lines of bi-polar ideologies such as communism and democracy. Without these polarizing constructs, the international situation began to take shape around the gaining strength of regional units.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, a wave of democracy spread across the globe, making it appear as though Francis Fukuyama’s concept of the universalization of democracy was steadily on the march during the 1990s. Yet, in some parts of the world, there had been a rejection of Western values and by extension, Western liberal democracy. This has been characterized by a rise in regional tensions. In, *The New Twilight Struggle: Freedom and Power in the Post-Cold War Era*, author Kim Holmes notes that a “rebirth of radical nationalism and ethnic hatreds which had been buried by the repression of Communist empires” had reemerged (Holmes 1994, 1). The underlying assumption was
that the promotion of democratic institutions would thwart political environments cultivating terrorism. The reality is that while democracies were proliferating around the world, individual terrorists groups and organizations were gaining new capacity and strength in an increasingly globalized world.

Author Samuel Huntington cautioned that the variety of different cultures and values systems in the world would produce a number of democratically elected leaders not supportive of Western liberal democracy (Huntington 1996, 53). Huntington points out an interesting distinction: that all democracies are not necessarily equal in action. The proliferation of democracy has not always produced national leaders that respect the rule of law or subscribe to Western liberal values such as freedom of expression and individual human rights. This presents a challenge for public diplomacy efforts that support democracy promotion because façade democracies become held up by opponents as an example of how the rhetoric of democracy does not match the implementation.

Huntington’s theory on an inevitable “clash of civilizations” makes note of the challenges facing democracy and was viewed as predictive when the terrorist attacks occurred on September 11, 2001. These attacks were “the first strikes on continental America since the British razed Washington to the ground in 1812” (Snow 2006, 392). Consequently these events shed a spotlight on terrorism, changed the political landscape of U.S. foreign policy and signified a new era in warfare.

In the wake of 9/11, the foreign policy environment has been radically altered. Nonetheless, it is still steeped in visions of national greatness derived from the political climate of the 17th century. President George W. Bush identified his national security
strategy for America post 9/11 as one which promoted the spread of democracy to nations held hostage to despots. In July 2001, in his Proclamation 7455 marking Captive Nations Week, Bush declared: “The 21st century must become the ‘Century of Democracy’” (Bush 2001). His concept of a “Century of Democracy” would be accomplished by not only making the entire world safe for democracy, but by making the world unsafe for non-democracies. Inherent in President Bush’s rhetoric are U.S. visions of national greatness and democracy promotion. For example, at the 2004 Republican National Convention, President George W. Bush declared his commitment to U.S. democracy promotion and the ideals of the nation. He said:

. . . the story of America is the story of expanding liberty: an ever-widening circle, constantly growing to reach further and include more. Our nation's founding commitment is still our deepest commitment: In our world, and here at home, we will extend the frontiers of freedom. (Bush 2004)

In explaining his foreign policy to the world, President Bush invoked the same ideology championed by the framers of the U.S.

In attempting to make the world safe for democracy, Bush re-affirmed the U.S. foreign policy ideology rooted in the U.S. visions of national greatness by assigning a redemptive role to the U.S. and promising to expand traditional U.S. values abroad. A fundamental pillar of the Bush Doctrine that responded to the terrorist attacks on 9/11 was the aggressive promotion of democracy.

While the Cold War was won by focusing on public diplomacy and transmitting the universal values of democracy and freedom, success in the “Global War on Terror,” dubbed the war of hearts and minds, has proved to be even more dependant on the success
of public diplomacy efforts. Author Joshua Fouts notes that “terrorist-attacks, military engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq and alarming increases in anti-American attitudes highlight the fractured nature of contemporary international relations” (Fouts 2006, 9). As the U.S. adapts to a new era of warfare public diplomacy efforts become even more critical to repairing America’s image abroad. The political landscape of the post 9/11 world has been characterized by an increase in technology, globalization and the power of the individual. Fouts highlights the ripple effect of global events and notes:

. . .media and communications technologies, multilateral economic institutions and markets, and the global nature of the war on terror are just a few realities that underscore the fact that socio-political realities on one side of the globe have important consequences for those living on the other side. (Fouts 2006, 9)

As countries such as Russia and China band together to oppose U.S. policies, they weaken the ability of the U.S. to conduct soft power which is needed to employ hard power policies. As author Joseph Nye notes, weaker states hope to deter the U.S. by making it more costly to use hard power and consequently more costly for the U.S. to go to war. They are also simultaneously capitalizing on unfavorable opinions of U.S. foreign policy by perpetuating the perception that nations should fear U.S. democracy promotion because it may lead to an “American empire” (Nye 2004, 26-27).

**Applying the Paradigm to Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy**

As illustrated by U.S. history, the ideology that underlies U.S. foreign policy is inherently linked to public diplomacy in three major ways: 1.) American exceptionalism has propelled American expansion and interaction with the rest of the world in the name of upholding America’s special place in the world; 2.) democracy promotion has been a key
motivator for influencing and communicating with foreign publics; and 3.) wartime foreign policies have served as a catalyst for an increase in soft power tools such as public diplomacy.

When viewed through the lens of the new paradigm public diplomacy efforts as reflected in theme one produce policies which are closely linked to near-term foreign policy goals. For example, while the U.S. should not base policy decisions on the whims of international opinion, when foreign policies generate anti-U.S. sentiment, near-term and forward-looking public diplomacy efforts are less effective because they are perceived as less credible and legitimate. The challenge for public diplomacy in the 21st century is that it has been historically tied to near-term foreign policies. With the American public’s acceptance of U.S. intervention as a call to national greatness, policy makers have neglected the long-term negative affects of the perception that America has imposed ethnocentric ideals on other countries. For example, in an attempt to erode U.S. soft power, nations opposing U.S. foreign policy cite democracy promotion as a superficial attempt to project America’s hegemonic power. It can be argued that the same critics of America’s power are also avid fans of the American popular culture and products they criticize. Despite criticism citing U.S. inconsistency on morality-based policies and values, the promotion of democracy abroad is a fundamental part of ideology in U.S. foreign policy. This element of foreign policy is also uniquely tied to public diplomacy because its success is dependant upon effectively articulating the universality of democratic values such as the freedom of self expression, liberty, respect for rule of law and fairness.
In a post-9/11 world, public diplomacy becomes the tool through which democracy promotion efforts are typically initiated based on strategic interests and practical necessity. Public diplomacy policies tend to be driven by executive initiatives and carried out through near-term policies. The challenge for near-term efforts is that they are subject to the unintended consequences of an ingrained foreign policy ideology that has been perceived as antithetical to core U.S. values of democracy, justice and liberty. Historically, it is through long-term public diplomacy efforts, such as people to people exchanges and cultural programming that the U.S. is able to build mutual understanding and organic support for mutually shared values such as freedom, respect for rule of law and self-expression rights. While these programs would be classified as soft power tools they support and achieve hard power objectives such as promoting democratic values and long-term support of U.S. foreign policy.

The U.S. visions of national greatness continue to be perpetuated in current U.S. foreign policy and by extension in public diplomacy efforts. Hence, near-term public diplomacy efforts that are tied to current foreign policy are reliant on an ideology rooted in the 1600s and may prove to be counter-productive in the post-9/11 world. As the political landscape changes the way we wage war, it also requires an additional emphasis on public diplomacy. The new challenge is that public diplomacy is rooted in Cold War philosophy which has not been as effective in waging a global campaign to capture the hearts and minds of foreign publics. Scholars cite this as problematic and note public diplomacy cannot be effective when you “Talk the Walk rather than Walk the Talk” (Snow 2006, 406).
CHAPTER 3

THEME 2: ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS

The second key theme influencing public diplomacy efforts is the organizational structure and politics surrounding government institutions of public diplomacy. Institutional politics, budget and stability of U.S. public diplomacy efforts are best highlighted when looking at the overall position of public diplomacy within the government. Understanding the historical basis, the formal role and responsibilities of public diplomacy organizations are key to recognizing the power and limitations of public diplomacy agencies.

Management of the U.S. image and the propagation of U.S. values and democratic traditions have been a part of the U.S. foreign policy apparatus since its inception. However, what distinguishes public diplomacy from other forms of foreign policy tools is that it lacked a formal practice and institution until the 20th century. It was not until the 1950s that the formal practice of what is now called “public diplomacy,” initiated as a tool for information dissemination, was organized. The need for international information dissemination was motivated by the wartime conflict of World War I (WWI). The War brought front and center the need to communicate with foreign publics and became a catalyst for public diplomacy efforts organized through governmental programs and agencies. Early institutions of public diplomacy, such as the Committee on Public Information (CPI), the Office of War Information (OWI) and the United States Information Agency (USIA), played a key role in influencing the scope and policy of contemporary
public diplomacy efforts. The formation of these agencies set a precedent that dictates the structure, mandate and role of public diplomacy within the federal government. Since the inception of early information agencies in the 20th century, public diplomacy agencies have been developed primarily in response to wartime pressures and have served to augment military efforts by increasing soft power gains and promoting American culture, values and institutions. This chapter highlights the early agencies that set the tone for future public diplomacy efforts and explores how these agencies shape the way the U.S. conducts public diplomacy in a post 9/11 environment.

*Early Public Diplomacy Efforts*

The turn of the 20th Century proved to be a fertile ground for the use of public diplomacy in foreign policy. As the U.S. started to become engaged in international conflicts, the value of foreign opinion became increasingly important. U.S. involvement in WWI highlighted the need to not only fight a military battle but also a “fight for the minds of men” (Creel 1920, 3). Early institutions of public diplomacy sought to improve America’s image, contribute to war efforts by building soft power and promote democracy abroad. A unique characteristic of early public information agencies is that they sought to influence both domestic and foreign publics on U.S. foreign policy with the goal of boosting wartime morale. This was illustrated when President Woodrow Wilson established the Committee on Public Information (CPI) in 1917 marking the first independent information agency established by the government and setting a precedent for the need to formalize the practice of public diplomacy in U.S. foreign policy.
The creation of the CPI was motivated primarily by the war and the need to garner both domestic and international support to make the effort successful. CPI had an international mandate and carried out its mission through a prolonged campaign lasting 18 months. The early agency conducted what the new paradigm for public diplomacy categorizes as forward-looking public diplomacy efforts because the committee approached information dissemination as though it were an advertising campaign. Much like an ad campaign, CPI conducted target messaging that sought to rally and promote support for the war. Historian Richard Pells notes that CPI employed many of the techniques that came to be associated with “twentieth-century propaganda” and “enlisted advertising executives, filmmakers, newspapermen, playwrights and anyone else with the skills and experience to publicize the Wilsonian dream of a world made safe for democracy” (Pells 1998, 8).

As CPI came to a close, chairman, George Creel, faced accusations that CPI was a propaganda tool used to influence the U.S. people. In response to these accusations, Creel related CPI’s work to a public relations experiment. In his memoirs, How We Advertised America, Creel refuted the criticism that CPI was a machine for propaganda by highlighting its likeness to an advertising campaign. He stated, “in all things, from first to last, without halt or change, it was a plain publicity proposition, a vast enterprise in salesmanship, the world’s greatest adventures in advertising...” (Creel 1920, 4). Controversy surrounding the operations of CPI prompted practitioners of advertising to draw a clear distinction between censorship, propaganda and public relations activities.

Before the term “public diplomacy” was recognized as a tool and field of foreign affairs, early agencies disseminating information faced scrutiny over their domestic
activities because it was believed they conducted wartime propaganda campaigns on U.S. citizens. This, coupled with governments, such as Germany and their use of the power of information and misinformation to wage war, made the U.S. public skeptical of propaganda efforts. As the term propaganda became associated with wartime tools of deception and persuasion, practitioners found the need to separate “propaganda” from public information efforts. Creel made a clear distinction between the natural meaning of propaganda and the connotation brought on by war. He describes CPI’s efforts as, “educational and informative throughout, for we had such confidence in our case as to feel that no other argument was needed than the simple, straightforward presentation of the facts” (Creel 1920, 4-5).

Despite the dismantling of CPI and the questions surrounding its domestic efforts, the organization represented the U.S. government’s first formal recognition that a public diplomacy institution, housed in the government, was needed to effectively communicate and persuade during times of war. CPI provided a roadmap for future public diplomacy efforts by focusing on three major efforts: 1.) near-term efforts to boost international and domestic morale in support of the war; 2.) forward-looking efforts to improve America’s image through a targeted advertising campaign; and 3.) forward-looking efforts to support the proliferation of democratic values (Wang 2007, 23). The implementation of CPI’s mandate produced primarily near-term and forward-looking public diplomacy policies which continue to be the primary focus of many public diplomacy efforts to date.

Propaganda vs. Public Diplomacy: WWII

The political climate surrounding World War II (WWII) had a significant impact on the future of U.S. public diplomacy. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was a shock for
the American public and served as a mobilizing force that launched the U.S. into WWI. U.S. entrance into this global conflict was a catalyst for modern public diplomacy efforts because the war re-focused resources on the need to promote American culture and values through international communication and media. Public diplomacy efforts grew in this political environment because “the United States entered the global conflict prepared, economically and militarily, to fight a total war” which included a commitment to “America’s cultural and media resources beyond anything contemplated during World War I” (Pells 1998, 34).

As the U.S. became involved in WWII, disseminating information and, in some cases misinformation, became a key priority in the multi-polar world. In, *Telling the American Story to the World: The Purpose of U.S. Public Diplomacy in Historical Perspective*, author Jian Wang writes, “as America joined the fight against the Axis countries, there was an urgent need for bureaucratic efficiency in the government’s communication operation” (Wang 2007, 23). The need for a centralized communication effort prompted President Franklin D. Roosevelt to create the Office of War Information (OWI) which was responsible for coordinating “all of America’s efforts to define for audiences at home and abroad the nation’s wartime policies and its vision of the postwar world” (Pells 1998, 34-35). OWI was tied to near-term and forward-looking public diplomacy efforts because its authorities were specifically linked to wartime activities and employed the use of “press, radio, motion picture and other facilities” (Manning 2001, 208).
Early public diplomacy institutions were critical to war efforts because WWI and WWII forced the U.S. to adapt a reluctant internationalist approach to foreign policy. CPI and OWI attempted to make the U.S. transition to an internationalist foreign policy more palatable to the American public through disseminating targeted wartime information and messages to a domestic audience. In addition to garnering support for U.S. efforts carried out abroad, OWI’s focus on international messaging made it a key institution of public diplomacy. OWI was an agent of public diplomacy focusing on a range of international activities that targeted both foreign and domestic audiences. Under the agencies mandate, OWI conducted a variety of activities related to war with international public diplomacy efforts “ranging from targeted information programs on the battlefield in support of military operations, to broad initiatives of communicating U.S. foreign policy around the world” (Wang 2006, 24). OWI’s operations were inherently tied to near-term wartime policy and hence easily dispensable once the war ended. A part of OWI’s challenge was that it couched its efforts in terms of U.S. ideology and attempted to appeal to deep rooted U.S. values of American exceptionalism that were “simply out of place in a war that policy makers claimed they were fighting for the purposes of military victory alone” (Winkler 1978, 153).

While OWI fell prey to budget cuts at the end of the war key OWI programs such as the Voice of America (VOA) radio broadcasts (created in 1942) were successfully institutionalized within the government. OWI’s legacy continues to be carried out through programs such as VOA and is an example of the impact early public diplomacy agencies had on setting a precedent for public diplomacy programming. These early agencies
provided the framework and also brought to the forefront contentious debates continuing to shape public diplomacy to this day.

**Institutionalizing Public Diplomacy**

Congress’ passage of the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948, referred to as the Smith-Mundt Act, laid the groundwork for the parameters of contemporary public diplomacy through its mandate to “promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries, and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries” (US Information and Educational Exchange Act 1948). When Congress passed the “United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948,” sponsored by Senator Alexander Smith (R-New Jersey) and Representative Karl Mundt (R-South Dakota), they institutionalized public diplomacy in the government. The mandate of this Act continues to govern contemporary public diplomacy and was the initial basis for the U.S. Government’s international information and cultural programs. The Smith-Mundt Act addressed concerns that arose from CPI and OWI regarding government propaganda and dissemination to domestic U.S. audiences by explicitly forbidding the U.S. Government’s domestic dissemination of any information programs prepared for international audiences (Wang 2007, 23). This Act was critical to the future of public diplomacy institutions because it provided a Congressional mandate that validated the government’s role in international public diplomacy and restricted the ability of public diplomacy agencies to target domestic audiences.
Case Study of the United States Information Agency (USIA)

In 1953, the United States Information Agency (USIA), an independent agency, was created to house international information activities such as the VOA, people to people exchanges, international broadcasting and cultural programs. At its launch, President Eisenhower outlined the central purpose of USIA—“to submit evidence to peoples of other nations by means of communication techniques that the objectives and policies of the United States are in harmony with and will advance their legitimate aspirations for freedom progress and peace” (Tuch 1990, 21).

While CPI served as a wartime tool during WWI and OWI during WWII, the USIA was created in response to the Cold War threats of Soviet propaganda. International information programs focused on building mutual understanding and respect for democratic institutions laid the groundwork for activities conducted by USIA. For example, in *Inventing Public Diplomacy*, author Wilson Dizard highlights the challenge of keeping international information agencies open because it is difficult to quantify the influence these programs had on the minds of men. Evident was that postwar programs focused on “introducing democratic concepts and practices to the leadership and population of two former enemies, Germany and Japan,” were successful in rebuilding U.S. relations with other nations (Dizzard 2004, 40). This type of programming, commonly referred to as democracy promotion, continues to be prevalent in contemporary public diplomacy because it is viewed as one of the more pragmatic public diplomacy programs producing results in influencing foreign policy strategy. When democracy focused public diplomacy
approaches proved effective in Japan and Germany, the structure of democracy promotion laid a strong case for the mandate and function of USIA.

The passage of Smith-Mundt was critical to the formation of USIA because it put in place a permanent structure allowing any subsequent agencies, in this case USIA, to become institutionalized. In addition to providing a framework for USIA, Smith-Mundt, “established ideological operations as a permanent part of U.S. foreign policy” (Dizzard 2004, 46). As the Soviet Union’s propaganda and ideological warfare was perceived as a threat to Western liberal democracy, USIA programs served to counter those efforts. Administrations such as Eisenhower and Reagan viewed international information programs as a tool to use in winning the ideological struggles of the “war of minds.” USIA faced an uncertain future as the Cold War struggles came to a close in the 1980s. As Wang notes, “with that earlier global ideological struggle declared ‘won’ after the fall of the Soviet Union and of the Berlin Wall, Western public diplomacy went into severe decline” as the end of the Cold War re-focused “the pragmatic security interests of policy-makers” (Wang 2007, 28).

As with previous public diplomacy agencies, the end of wartime efforts also included the scaling down of ideological campaigns and international information programs. This, combined with domestic pressures to reduce government spending, produced a hostile environment for public diplomacy funding. Policy makers on both sides of the aisle sought to phase out public diplomacy efforts. After the cold war, the proliferation of democracy around the world produced a political climate where “neither Congress nor the Bush I and Clinton administrations saw a rationale for these cultural
diplomacy] activities” (Pachios 2002). The end of the Cold War shifted the focus away from cultural programs and long-term mutual understanding based public diplomacy and reflected a pragmatic approach to public diplomacy through near-term policies. The Clinton administrations consolidated public diplomacy efforts, particularly long-term efforts, culminating in 1999 with the absorption of the USIA into the State Department (Snow 2006, 394).

The dismantling of USIA illustrates the influence of domestic politics in foreign policy decision making. Domestic forces such as federal budget deficits, elections and campaign promises weigh heavily on policy makers’ support of government institutions. In 1994 the Republicans gained control of Congress for the first time in 40 years and entered into a united “Republic Contract with America” which sought to reduce the size of government, encourage lower taxes and encourage small businesses and entrepreneurship (Republican Contract with America 1994). The influence of the “Contract with America” Congress was pivotal because the Republic majority in the House weakened President Clinton’s political capital forcing him to make decisions about budget cuts. His concession to Congress was that USIA be dismantled and folded into the State Department. The merger of USIA into the State Department was contentious because it was believed to have been completed without “any regard for the merits of, and new requirements for, information age diplomacy” (Pachios 2002). As for the impact of public diplomacy agencies in promoting America’s image abroad, Donald Rumsfeld acknowledged in March 2006 that the closure of the USIA may have been a mistake:
It wasn’t perfect, but it had libraries around the world, made movies, had various seminars and opportunities for people to learn more about the United States. I don’t know what the 21st century version of that is, but we need it badly and we haven’t got it. (Rumsfeld 2006)

One year after the consolidation, the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy evaluated the effect of the merger on cultural diplomacy, namely long-term mutual understanding-based programs, and concluded innovation and flexibility were very difficult to achieve in “the huge and rigid bureaucracy of the State Department” (Pachios 2002). The Commission noted under the State Department, public diplomacy was largely driven by the near-term foreign policy needs of U.S. embassies overseas. It was found, given the institutional culture of the State Department, it was unrealistic to expect embassy staff to implement programs revolving around long-term public diplomacy such as exchanges and information dissemination because this stands in contrast to the policy-driven State Department which is inherently based on near-term foreign policy goals (U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy 2000). The State Department is structured to be a primarily pragmatic, highly centralized and hierarchical institution driven by the near-term and forward-looking policy needs of the Secretary of State and the President. The Commission noted many employees acknowledged the State Department “does policy not programs” (U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy 2000). In contrast, USIA was an independent agency formed to implement programs. Subsequent reports on public diplomacy after the cold war note that while policy makers were quick to merge USIA into the State Department, they failed to see the unintended consequences this would have on long-term cultural and educational programs. For example, the commission noted:
Melding the field-driven, program-oriented USIA into the Washington-driven, policy-oriented State Department has proven to be a major challenge… people at USIA ‘have come from an organization that sent out information and arrived at an organization that draws information in and by nature keeps it locked in. (Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy 2000)

When the USIA was merged into the State Department, it became the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). According to the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, the official purpose of USIA, and by extension ECA, is to “increase mutual understanding between people of the United States and people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges” (Mutual Educational and Cultural Affairs Act 1961). Despite the altruistic long-term and mutual understanding-based rhetoric used to describe ECA, the shift from USIA to the State Department has caused programmatic areas to function like a pragmatic bureaucracy. The shift occurred in part because the implementation of the programs became even more tied to promoting near-term national interest for the Department of State.

*Applying the New Paradigm to Organizational Politics*

While the case of USIA highlights the underpinnings of contemporary U.S. public diplomacy efforts, it also reflects the historical challenge public diplomacy institutions have faced because of their tie to wartime efforts which are inherently near-term. Because wartime efforts are by nature focused, strategic campaigns, they tend to produce near-term policies, and in cases of extended wars forward-looking policies, ideological activities take precedent. Scholars contend “U.S. public diplomacy has been principally an ad hoc instrument of American foreign policy to meet wartime exigencies and has been underscored by the promotion of American values of democracy and freedom” (Wang
As wartime efforts and foreign policy goals shift, so does the focus of public diplomacy activities. This ad hoc nature of public diplomacy has limited the ability of the public diplomacy apparatus to focus on long-term policy and has brought out a fundamental debate: whether the role of public diplomacy should be to “serve a strategic policy function versus merely [serve] as a “mouthpiece” within the foreign affairs apparatus” (Wang 2007, 28).
CHAPTER 4

THEME 3: COMPETITIVE PRESSURES FROM RIVALRY

The third key theme that has influenced the contours of public diplomacy efforts is competitive pressure from rivalry. Competitive pressures from rivals during wartime, commercial media and the advance of technology in the 21st century have all contributed to the mandate and contours of public diplomacy.

From the printing press to the internet, the rise of the information age has been characterized by the proliferation of mass communication and technology, a growing youth population around the world and the increased mobility of populations. These elements have led to the realization of Marshall McLuhan’s “Global Village,” characterized as an interconnected village which lacks traditional boundaries of space and geography. McLuhan notes that “after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned” (McLuhan, Understanding Media 1964, 3). This changing geopolitical landscape presents new challenges and opportunities for public diplomacy.

While the geopolitical landscape of the global village has evolved, the way in which the United States intentionally and unintentionally communicates with the rest of the world has remained static. This chapter explores competitive pressures such as the proliferation of mass instantaneous communication, the influence of corporate broadcasting and competition from wartime rivals, to highlight the new challenges and opportunities facing public diplomacy.
Early Competitive Pressures from Rivalry

An early catalyst for U.S. public diplomacy efforts was the need to combat the efforts of countries such as Germany, Japan and the Soviet Union, which posed military and ideological threats to the U.S. As the U.S. sought to become an influential player in both the global economy and world politics, success became tied to the country’s ability to articulate its policies and ideas to foreign publics to combat polarizing ideologies. As other countries pushed to tap into international audiences through radio programming, there was a strategic effort put forth for the U.S. to catch up. This force of competition propelled radio into a key medium of U.S. public diplomacy.

During WWI and WWII, radio was the premier medium for reaching foreign publics and promoting American values such as freedom and democracy. On the brink of World War II, Axis powers Germany and Japan were actively pursuing public diplomacy in an attempt to increase their soft power influence by promoting their cultural values and ideology. The 1930s was a critical point for public diplomacy initiatives because foreign governments were increasingly using radio to promote favorable images abroad. As “communists and fascists competed to promote favorable images to foreign publics,” the U.S. was mobilized to counter these ideologies with messages focused on democracy and freedom (Nye 2004, 97).

The U.S. became a key player in international radio and by 1939 ramped up U.S. broadcasts overseas, surpassing Germany’s broadcasts to Latin America. America’s entry in World War II (WWII) was a catalyst for the U.S. government to focus heavily on broadcasting abroad. In an effort to remain a global competitor, some U.S. broadcasts were
featured around the clock. The growth of Voice of America (VOA) programming was evident by 1943 when VOA had “twenty-three transmitters delivering news in twenty-seven languages” (Nye 2008, 98). As evidenced by the expansion of VOA, competition from rival countries was a key motivator for the U.S. government to employ public diplomacy tools such as radio broadcasts furthering U.S. values and policies. Mass communication, particularly broadcasting, remained a key component of U.S. public diplomacy during the Cold War, and “reached half the Soviet population every week and between 70 and 80 percent of the populace of Eastern Europe” (Blinken 2003, 287). Early pressures from rivalry such as the international communication efforts from Germany, Japan and the Soviet Union elevated the importance of reaching foreign audiences during wartime.

**Soft Power and Competition**

As the U.S. responded to competitive pressures from rivalry by reaching out to foreign publics to increase understanding and goodwill towards U.S. policies and values, it also increased U.S. soft power. This less quantifiable influence on foreign publics is a key component of long-term foreign policy. The ability of the U.S. to successfully translate ideas, values and culture through public diplomacy is directly tied to its international soft power. As evidenced by the genesis of public diplomacy, and early government initiatives for these activities, the practical need to increase U.S. soft power during wartime has been a driving force behind U.S. public diplomacy.

Nations have been competing to influence their prestige and soft power in the world for centuries. While U.S. public diplomacy efforts began to take shape around World War
I, the value of soft power has long been recognized by other nations. The value of soft power was recognized early on by the French, who employed tools of public diplomacy to enhance their reputation in the world after the Franco-Prussian War. The French strategically focused on promoting French culture and “after its defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, the French government sought to repair the nation’s shattered prestige by promoting its language and literature through the Alliance Francaise created in 1883” (Pells 1998, 31). This institution is a reflection of international competition and focuses heavily on promoting French ideals through “the projection of French culture abroad” (Pells 1998, 31).

The French success with cultural diplomacy activities paved the way for key powers in World War I to engage in cultural diplomacy. Both the allied and central powers followed suit in an attempt to increase their prestige in the world and generate soft power. Alliance Francaise endured the test of time and still operates with 1,071 locations in 110 different countries. The organization’s focus on long-term cultural diplomacy, including language classes, has contributed to the way cultural diplomacy, a subset of public diplomacy activities, is carried out. For example, under USIA, a component of U.S. cultural diplomacy activities included the proliferation of English language and cultural centers abroad. These centers provided foreign publics the opportunity to build tangible skills while simultaneously increasing their understanding and appreciation for American culture. While early competitive pressures from rivals served as a motivator for the U.S. to expand cultural diplomacy efforts, many of these long-term activities were suspended during times of peace.
The French model is an example of the influence competition has had on public diplomacy activities. The trend towards public diplomacy was further accelerated by wartime conflict and competition brought on by World War I. This served as a catalyst for the “rapid acceleration of efforts to deploy soft power” and prompted governments that were key players in the war to establish “offices to propagandize their cause” (Nye 2004, 96). Competitive pressure from allied forces such as France and central powers such as Germany prompted the U.S. to mobilize public diplomacy efforts through the creation of the Committee for Public Information (CPI). While the U.S. was seeking to catch up to the rest of the world, it was also a central target of other countries such as Britain and Germany who “competed to create favorable images in American public opinion” (Nye 2004, 96). The global proliferation of public diplomacy institutions during WWI suggests that the importance of soft power was not only tangible but also influential in shaping the structure and role of future public diplomacy efforts. As the U.S. embarked on public diplomacy institutions such as the Office of War Information (OWI), they fell prey to the need for additional funds, the lack of a long-term sustainable strategy and the need for a stable institution to coordinate and manage public diplomacy efforts.

Private Sector Competition

As the U.S. government began to institutionalize its international communication efforts through agencies such as CPI their goals were focused on near-term and forward-looking public diplomacy policies. CPI employed forward-looking policies that sought to persuade the public through advertising campaigns and ideological propaganda. In attempting to launch strategic public diplomacy efforts the U.S. government entered a
domain traditionally reserved for the private sector. Government entrance into advertising and media alarmed private sector practitioners who were concerned that government expansion into international communication would compete with commercial media operations. As pressures from “emerging commercial media against government-operated information outlets” increased, the scope of activities early institutions of public diplomacy could engage in became more narrowly defined (Dizard 2004, 37).

Despite concern from the private sector the government’s wartime mandate opened up avenues for government institutions and the commercial media to work together. For example, the Committee on Public Information (CPI) featured a film division that “made documentaries and organized tours of Hollywood stars to familiarize other nations with American products and ideals” (Pells 1998, 88). This collaboration with Hollywood was picked up by the Office of Wartime Information (OWI) and was successful in influencing the motion pictures industry by shaping “Hollywood into an effective propaganda tool, suggesting additions and deletions to many films and denying licenses to others” (Pells 1998, xiii). Critics of this collaboration believed the government overstepped its role by actively censoring the media and placing restrictions on words, images and film. OWI’s questionable censorship practices drew increased scrutiny from Congress and eventually the motion picture bureau within OWI was closed.

As with previous public diplomacy programs born out of war, the stability of OWI was tied to wartime efforts and funding. When the Japanese agreed to unconditional surrender on August 14, 1945, after the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the U.S. was on a path to victory and began to downsize the military budget. Sixteen days later, on
August 30, 1945 President Truman issued an executive order to abolish the OWI. The postwar dismantling of OWI was directly tied to “budgetary concerns in Congress as well as pressure from the emerging commercial media against government-operated information outlets” (Dizard 2004, 37). As media outlets moved away from functioning as a public service, the U.S. media became increasingly focused on profit driven programming. Scholars note that as the commercial media became global, it was primarily exporting entertainment programming that appealed to mass audiences through larger-than-life stereotypes, sex and violence.

With the dismantling of USIA after the Cold War the Western image was projected by outside influences such as Hollywood movies and multinational corporations. In *The Revival of the Propaganda State: U.S. Propaganda at Home and Abroad Since 9/11* authors Nancy Snow and Philip Taylor note that:

>. . .by abrogating itself from self-explanation and self-justification through its state-run international information agencies, a perception or information vacuum was being created that was being filled by two elements, neither of which was particularly beneficial to the world’s surviving superpower. (Snow 2006, 394)

The elements authors Snow and Taylor cite are the rise of advertising from multinational companies and the proliferation of disinformation via the internet. They note that corporate advertising in the developing world led to “charges that the US was attempting to ‘McDominate’ the world through ‘coca-colonialism’” by spreading western products and by extension “the values that came to be associated with them” (Snow 2006 394). The unintended consequence of the globalization of products and media is that the popular
culture being exported does not accurately represent a holistic view of American values, culture and beliefs.

As the world enters a new era of warfare, scholars note there has been a rise of “dissenting anti-western voices” which are now able to reach followers and publics around the world via the World Wide Web (Snow 2006, 395). For example, prominent news stations such as “Al Jazeera, founded in 1995 and quickly dubbed ‘the Arab CNN’” have become commonplace around the world (Snow 2006, 395). While news stations have gone regional, the U.S. commercial media is exported in the form of entertainment programming. While the U.S. government explores reorganizing institutions of public diplomacy to provide more coordinated messages and international communication, the multinational corporations in the private sector have already been influencing international opinion through products and popular culture.

The products and services of the private sector, including commercial media, have a subtle but far-reaching impact around the world. For example, in Not Like Us author Richard Pells notes that even in the early days of public diplomacy the “American corporate and advertising executives, as well as the heads of Hollywood studios, were selling not only their products but also America’s culture and values, the secrets of its success, to the rest of the world” (Pells 1998, xiii). Imbedded in American products and popular culture are U.S. values. As scholars and practitioners explore new avenues for public diplomacy, they should increasingly seek to engage the various stakeholders that already influence international publics and collaborate more with the private sector.
**Public Diplomacy in the Information Age**

Throughout U.S. history the advance of public diplomacy has been closely tied to the proliferation of technology. Walter Lippmann attributed technological advances in communication as key to the rise of rhetoric, competition of ideologies and the use of propaganda. For example, the power of technology is evidenced by the early dependence on technologies, such as the printing press, to get out communication, such as Thomas Paine’s groundbreaking work, “Common Sense.” Technology has been a tool of the craft of public diplomacy because of its use in advancing global communication. Scholars note that technology is critical because “all the deciding elements of mankind could be brought to think about the same ideas, or at least the same names for ideas, simultaneously” (Lippmann 1922, 133). Technology has also been a powerful political tool. For example, “without cable, radio, telegraph and the daily press, the experiment of the Fourteen Points would have been impossible” (Lippmann 1922, 133). As the U.S. explores the impact of new technologies, the field of public diplomacy provides a framework for “thinking about the impact of the ‘communication revolution’ on the practice of public diplomacy” (U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations 2008, 5).

In the information age, characterized by the rise of digital technologies such as the internet, social networking, personal computers and increased satellite technology, the threat of ideology and totalitarian regimes becomes minimized compared to the power these technologies give to the individual. The information age has produced a climate where individuals no longer need instruments of government or weapons of mass destruction to pose a threat. As author Joseph Nye writes in the book *Soft Power*, we are
living in a new era of world politics which is characterized by “privatization of war,” where
technology increases an individuals “access to destructive power” (Nye 2004, 24). The
tools of warfare have increasingly become linked to information, disinformation and
misinformation. Wars are no longer won by hard power alone but are increasingly reliant
on tools of soft power such as public diplomacy. As warfare becomes “more digital,
networked and flexible, military assets like communications have risen in the mix of
instruments of state power” (Nye 2004, 302). The concept of waging war over ideas is not
new but the tools and speed with which it is fought have become more innovative,
amplifying the role of civilians and individuals to a mass scale.

As wars of ideology continue to be waged, the dissemination of information and
ideas continues to be critical. However, the nature, speed and availability of information
enabled through technology has challenged the effectiveness of public diplomacy. For
example, scholars note that in an information age it is often the side which has the better
story that wins—“until recently it was the lack of information that shaped peoples image of
other places, rather than information overload” (Ham 8, 2007). As the information age re-
shapes how culture is communicated, the concept of “a universal communication
community becomes a practical necessity” (Griffith 2007, 53). As the global village
becomes inundated with messages the way in which the U.S. communicates with the rest of
the world becomes increasingly important as countries become suspicious of rhetoric and
look towards credibility in communication and actions to set policy. During a 1963
testimony before a Congressional Committee, Edward R. Murrow, then Director of USIA,
summed up this view best when he said:
American traditions and the American ethic require us to be truthful, but the most important reason is that truth is the best propaganda and lies are the worst. To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful. It is as simple as that. (Subcommittee on International Organizations 1963)

In the age of mass instantaneous communication, the competition among rival governments for soft power is less based on producing more broadcasts than other governments and more focused on competing with other governments by demonstrating an underlying national credibility (Nye 2008, 100). In the absence of a perceived credibility abroad, the “instruments of public diplomacy cannot translate resources into the soft power of attraction” which is measured by minds changed as opposed to dollars spent (Nye 2008, 101). Just as technology aided in the early success of public diplomacy efforts by allowing the U.S. to reach key international populations by projecting American values and policies abroad, the U.S. must adapt to the information age and the new challenges it presents for public diplomacy.

**Applying the New Paradigm to Competitive Pressures**

As outlined in this chapter, competitive pressures from rivalry have served as a catalyst for developing public diplomacy policies and institutions. Competitive pressures have caused public diplomacy efforts to become focused on mandated mediums, messages and policies.

Early public diplomacy efforts were focused on key themes and institutions that revolved around furthering foreign policy goals through American values and culture during wartime. This strategic focus is an example of near-term and forward-looking public diplomacy rooted in fundamental foreign policy values such as American exceptionalism.
and democracy promotion. The appeal to U.S. values has helped governmental institutions justify their near-term and forward-looking focus on international communication through information outlets.

As public diplomacy institutions cropped up, were dismantled after wartime and then re-invented years later, the short-term nature of this lifecycle made it difficult to retain institutional knowledge on best practices and effective strategies. If public diplomacy institutions were to be imbedded into the government apparatus post war, it became increasingly important to gain supporters across the spectrum including stakeholders in the private sector, government agencies and policy making functions. Because public diplomacy efforts have been historically motivated by short-term foreign policy initiatives of a particular administration they have been vulnerable to disappearing at the close of an administration or end of an initiative. Government development of ad hoc institutions of public diplomacy produced a structure focused on near-term goals as opposed to long-term strategies for engagement. This has been a consistent challenge for public diplomacy and will need to be addressed through defining the role public diplomacy should play in foreign policy.
The fourth and final key theme that has influenced the contours of public diplomacy is leadership personalities. Champions and opponents across government from Congress, the White House and the State Department have all had varying levels of influence on the themes, structure and role of public diplomacy.

Leadership personalities of individuals, their political capital and their ideas in good currency have all impacted public diplomacy. The forces of personalities such as President Woodrow Wilson, CPI chairman George Creel and USIA Director Edward Murrow, have played a role in the underlying values and mandate of public diplomacy efforts to date. In *American Exceptionalism and US Foreign Policy*, author Siobhan McEvoy-Levy points out that:

> periodically, in times of grave crisis, such as war, and in times of slow-breaking crisis, such as international political transformation, the public diplomacy of a President or Secretary of State have deterrence, mediation, threat and counter-threat, alliance-building and ally-supporting functions. (McEvoy-Levy 2001, 3)

As illustrated by McEvoy-Levy, the abstract concept of leadership and influence has very tangible functions during times of crisis. Understanding the ideology, outlook and underlying values framing key leadership personalities helps to provide insight into the underpinnings of modern day public diplomacy.
**Presidential Leadership**

The leadership of the U.S. presidency dramatically shapes the nations foreign policy and by extension U.S. public diplomacy. A powerful policy directive of the U.S. presidency is the issuance of executive orders. This policy tool serves as a catalyst for implementing action and reforms consistent with the president’s agenda and priorities. Presidential executive orders have set a precedent for the mandate and structure of public diplomacy efforts by creating key intuitions of public diplomacy such as the CPI, created by Woodrow Wilson under Executive Order No. 2594, and OWI, created by Franklin Roosevelt under Executive Order No. 9182. President Eisenhower was pivotal in establishing an independent agency to centralize foreign information dissemination programs which then served as a catalyst for the formation of USIA (Reorganization Plan No. 8 1955). While executive influence has been critical to establishing institutions of public diplomacy, the success of these institutions is often dependent on the leadership personalities and internal champions that help organizations gain momentum and recognition as a sustainable part of U.S. foreign policy.

The underlying values and assumptions inherent in presidential decision making plays a key role in public diplomacy efforts. For example, President Woodrow Wilson championed ideology rooted in democracy and American exceptionalism through his 14-point blueprint for a better world. Wilson’s belief in fundamental U.S. ideology such as American exceptionalism served as an ideological motivator that “carried to new limits the old American commitment to an active international policy in the name of national greatness and liberty for all men” (Hunt 1988, 134). Wilson’s vision and ideology was
carried over to CPI and implemented by CPI chairman George Creel who he worked closely with to align CPI with wartime rhetoric. Wilson’s rhetorical alignment was targeted and “in the case of CPI, Wilson’s high-minded vision about the nature and outcome of the war was clearly and consistently presented to the international audience” (Wang 2006, 23). As evidenced by Wilson’s involvement in the formation of CPI and his vision for early public diplomacy efforts, having presidential support is crucial to the role public diplomacy plays in foreign policy.

*Presidential Influence: Case Study of USIA*

The lifecycle of USIA is a particularly interesting case study in the influence of Presidential administrations. Despite President Dwight Eisenhower’s creation of USIA, during the 1950s “neither Eisenhower nor [Secretary of State] John Dulles regarded USIA as a pivotal agency in the conduct of foreign policy” (Pells 1998, 88). This detachment affected the influence of USIA and highlights the impact personalities can have on the role of public diplomacy in foreign affairs. A challenge for USIA was that “USIA’s directors did not have the sort of close personal relationship with Eisenhower that George Creel had once enjoyed with Woodrow Wilson” (Pells 1998, 88).

Despite a slow start under Eisenhower, the transition into a John F. Kennedy administration brought structural changes to USIA. During this administration the USIA received a much needed internal champion when Kennedy appointed Edward R Murrow as the new director. Murrow’s background as a well known CBS reporter gave him the name recognition and credibility the agency needed to be recognized as a legitimate component of foreign affairs. Despite Kennedy’s strategic pick of Murrow and his focus on improving
international attitudes of the U.S., the immediate security concerns presented by Cuba and the Bay of Pigs scandal, relegated public diplomacy to the sidelines. A key challenge that plagued USIA was that it was caught up in the near-term policy goals of the administration and could not focus on its broader, longer-term mission, of building mutual understanding around the world. This challenge was illustrated by Murrow himself during a testimony before the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements of the Committee on Foreign Affairs at the U.S. House of Representatives. During this testimony, he stated that the sole purpose of USIA was to “further the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives as enunciated by the President and the State Department” (Subcommittee on International Organizations 1963). While this reflects the reality of the agency’s efforts, USIA’s mission and rhetoric are couched in terms of a long-term mission to foster mutual understanding.

Throughout the course of his tenure USIA Director Murrow became increasingly frustrated with his role as merely a mouthpiece for foreign policy as opposed to a part of the policy process. After Murrow’s resignation in 1964, Kennedy made a significant distinction in public diplomacy by differentiating between information activities traditionally carried out by USIA, and education and cultural activities, known as cultural diplomacy. Kennedy institutionalized cultural diplomacy activities by creating a separate cultural bureau of the State Department and assigned the head of the bureau the role of Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. This presidential shift in the institutional structure still remains in tact and has outlasted USIA which was subject to budget cuts after the Cold War.
The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) has survived because it had a clear mandate to promote cultural diplomacy through exchanges and activities that build mutual understanding around the world. On the other hand, USIA had a diminishing role in foreign policy that was reflected from 1963 to 1993, when “the federal budget grew fifteen-fold, but the United States Information Agency (USIA) budget grew only six and a half times larger” (Glassman 2008). Under Murrow’s leadership USIA had more than 12,000 employees at its peak in the mid-1960s. After this brief spike the agency slowly declined in influence by 1994 and was reduced to only 9,000 staff and then 6,715 on the eve of its takeover by the U.S. State Department (United States Information Agency 1996).

While public diplomacy appeared to gain momentum during the Kennedy administration, the reality was that it was increasingly pushed to the fringes of foreign policy. The long-term role of public diplomacy in foreign policy had not been clearly defined or articulated by prior or subsequent presidential administrations and hence has remained a short-term activity as opposed to a long-term policy strategy. This is illustrated by the lifecycle of USIA which, in the absence of a long-term presidential mandate for public diplomacy, became increasingly tied to the autonomy of its own agency and programs. The inability of this agency to be integrated into the policy making process made it a natural target for budget cuts after the Cold War.

The institutional and leadership challenges USIA faced were magnified when the U.S. enjoyed a period of peace after the Cold War that made soft power seem expendable. Between 1989 and 1999, the budget of the USIA, adjusted for inflation,
decreased 10 percent (Glassman 2). The eventual folding of USIA into the State Department was as much a factor of domestic politics as it was a dying interest in soft power. By the 1990s, President Clinton’s weak political capital with a Republican controlled Congress subjected him to acquiesce with Congress on calls to cut government spending. Clinton’s compromise was to dismantle USIA and fold it into the State Department. Had USIA been more imbedded into the policy making process and had a champion in Secretary of State Madeline Albright, the dismantling of the organization may have been re-considered or re-focused on reform.

Presidential leadership and political capital is a key characteristic of U.S. foreign policy and consequently plays a large role in shaping public diplomacy efforts. Scholars note that public diplomacy must come from the top and that the “President must establish a clearly defined role for the nation's PD agencies and help to ensure that their message is coherent and focused” (Dale 2007, 2). For public diplomacy to play a larger role in responding to the challenges of the 21st century it must be driven by the leadership, interest and role ascribed to it by the president.

*Internal Champions at the State Department*

Since USIA was folded into the State Department in 1999, the U.S. message abroad has been primarily delivered by public diplomacy efforts run out of the State Department. Because the State Department is the central hub of all U.S. foreign policy, the role of the Secretary of State has become increasingly important to furthering a consistent U.S. message abroad. The coveted role of Secretary of State is a first tier position in the President’s cabinet and is forth in line to succession for the presidency. The Secretary of
State is not only the official responsible for U.S. foreign policy but also sets the tone for engagement, collaboration and negotiation. A Secretary of State’s style of engagement, pre-disposition to soft power and background, all play a part in influencing public diplomacy. Hence, having a Secretary of State as an internal champion of public diplomacy plays a substantial role in boosting public diplomacy efforts and defining its role in foreign policy.

While each Secretary of State brings their own style, character and experience to the position, there are certain constants that reflect the underpinnings of the position and duty. Those constants are namely the values that underlay U.S. foreign policy such as the belief in Western liberal democracy and American exceptionalism. As illustrated by theme one in chapter two, these components of U.S. foreign policy can be traced back to the founding of the country and early Secretaries of State. As early as 1895, Secretary of State Richard Olney helped push for U.S. regional dominance as he warned Britain and all other powers against meddling in the Americas. His remarks reflected the ideals of American exceptionalism and called for the U.S. to “realize its great place among the powers of the earth and to accept the commanding position belonging to it” (Hunt 1988, 131). These U.S. ideologies and corresponding policies are delivered via the State Department and are an innate component of both foreign policy and public diplomacy.

The current public diplomacy apparatus in the State Department is unique in that it attempts to carve out a specific role and office for a chief official of public diplomacy. Under the current structure the President appoints, and Congress confirms, a position within the Department for an Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public
Affairs who reports directly to the Secretary of State. Within this framework, the current Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs has two jobs: to oversee public diplomacy efforts and to coordinate a government-wide effort to carry out policies to help win the war of ideas (Glassman 2008, 2).

The attacks on U.S. soil on 9/11 highlighted the need for public diplomacy and its historical link as an information tool during wartime. As the U.S. declared a global war on terror, the tools of public diplomacy were awakened and increasingly focused on military priorities such as winning the war of ideas and combating terrorism. This was illustrated in April 2006 when President Bush designated the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy as the interagency lead on coordinating the government wide effort on the war of ideas (Glassman, 2008). While this coordination is a big task, it represents an acknowledgement of the need to encourage interagency coordination.

Critics of the current structure of public diplomacy argue that in the absence of a leadership position which reports directly to the President on public diplomacy, other agencies have gravitated towards the field in an attempt to define public diplomacy primarily as a tool for wartime efforts. A common example of other agencies involvement in public diplomacy is the Department of Defense’s (DOD) focus on forward-looking terms and strategies rooted in “Strategic Communication” which they use to describe public diplomacy as a strategic tool in the weapons of advocacy arsenal. While DOD’s presence in public diplomacy makes critics nervous that public diplomacy will be reduced to a tool in the wartime arsenal, the militarization of public diplomacy has been a part of its roots since inception.
The contemporary challenge facing public diplomacy is not the militarization of it but that public diplomacy must adapt to rapidly changing technology and challenges of the 21st century. Some argue public diplomacy will not successfully adapt without the leadership of a champion in the State Department. Without an internal champion, such as a Secretary of State who is wedded to public diplomacy, or the creation of a new position reporting directly to the president, this critique may be accurate. As historical precedence illustrates, without a champion or active threat of war, there has been a downgrade in the significance of public diplomacy. Some critics believe that this has created a vacuum for agencies such as DOD to restructure public diplomacy efforts to focus on strictly military aims. Despite this criticism current increases in the budget for cultural diplomacy activities indicate that both congress and the administration recognize the need for soft power tools that highlight America’s culture and universal values.

While DOD has the lead on strategic activities, the mandate to conduct public diplomacy is housed in the State Department. The State Department has just now started to adapt to the realities of the post-9/11 world through its institutionalization of the position of Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. While the State Department continues to adapt, DOD has been credited with moving swiftly to utilize its resources to better understand how public diplomacy can be employed to win the war of ideas. DOD has been effective in carving a niche role for itself in public diplomacy because of the DOD presence in the ‘last three feet’ of ideological warfare (Russell 2007). The recognition that tools of soft power are critical to military success have prompted DOD to define expanded roles for defense support in public diplomacy
Their involvement in humanitarian and relief efforts such as the response to the 2003 tsunami disaster in Asia establishes DOD as a player in the public diplomacy arena.

While the State Department is in need of a re-vamp, a number of scholar and commission reports have put forth recommendations and actions that call for a transformation of U.S. public diplomacy. The recent U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy report noted that a challenge for public diplomacy has been that those within the State Department charged with conducting public diplomacy “are not trained on, reviewed on or tasked with conduct of public diplomacy” (U.S. Advisory Commission Report 1). The unintended consequence of this is that public diplomacy has started to be taken up by other agencies such as DOD, eager to become the dominant actor in winning the war of ideas and leading foreign engagement during wartime.

While DOD has managed to dominate media appearances and has the resources to adapt more quickly, there is recognition among scholars and practitioners that the State Department has been effective in making a dent in the war of ideas through cultural diplomacy efforts which focus on building long-term mutual understanding around the world. While there has not been a significant amount of coordination between traditional public diplomacy efforts run out of the State Department, and budding efforts from DOD, there is still much room for coordination between the two efforts and for each agency to play to its strengths and collaborate.
**Applying the New Paradigm to Leadership Personalities and Positions of Influence**

While historically Presidents and Secretaries of State have been focused on their administrations near-term foreign policy agendas and strategies, they also have the capacity to provide leadership and implement policies that promote forward-looking and long-term public diplomacy. The influence of a high-level champion can be instrumental in transforming public diplomacy. As illustrated by Eisenhower’s authorization of what would eventually become USIA, leadership decisions can set a precedent that has a long-term impact.

A major challenge for public diplomacy is that the current structure does not have a designated government official that reports directly to the President. In the testimony “Implementing Smart Power: Setting an Agenda for National Security Reform,” scholars Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the need for “Smart Power” in the 21st century and its connection to public diplomacy. In their call to action, they noted the need for a new position referred to as a “Smart Power” deputy, responsible for long range planning such as developing and managing a “strategic framework for planning policies and allocating resources, and working closely with relevant Congressional committees” (U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations 2008, 7). A component of the “Smart Power” deputy’s work would be to focus on a consistent long-term strategy for public diplomacy. Armitage and Nye point out the constraints of the national security advisor and note that the position is tied to near-term policies that keep the national security advisor “swept up in the urgent challenges of unfolding crises and lacks
the ability to focus on long-term strategy development or manage interagency trade-offs” (U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations 2008, 7).

The lack of long-term strategy and interagency coordination had caused public diplomacy to be tied to short-term, temporary policies. As public diplomacy begins to adapt to the 21st century, one of the critical elements to ensure its success is to institutionalize a role for a public diplomacy official that reports to the president and is part of the long-term policy making process.
CHAPTER 6
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Identifying the four underlying themes that drive public diplomacy builds a foundation for understanding the rise of public diplomacy and the role it has historically played in foreign policy. When viewed in aggregate, these four themes shed light on the current practice of public diplomacy and reveal key influences on future policies.

The new paradigm for categorizing public diplomacy provides a framework for identifying how the four themes influence policy decisions that reflect either near-term, forward-looking or long-term goals. Based on the historical roots, practical implementation and mandates of public diplomacy, the four themes illustrate that the structure and role of public diplomacy has been primarily focused on near-term goals. Through identifying and exploring these major themes influencing public diplomacy, it becomes apparent each theme is primarily tied to near-term foreign policy driven by wartime priorities, presidential agendas and a rapid response to current events.

When analyzing policy priorities through the public diplomacy categories outlined in the new paradigm, a trend emerges reflecting that each theme has an influence on the time-frame, scope and depth of public diplomacy produced. For example, theme one on ideology and foreign policy highlights that since the founding of the U.S., foreign policies have been inherently motivated by a belief in core values such as democracy and American exceptionalism. Bedrock ideology such as freedom of expression, democratic government, rule of law and U.S. visions of national greatness provide a rhetorical foundation for much
U.S. foreign policy. These long-standing values are bi-partisan and a key component of political speech and policy. During President-elect Barak Obama’s acceptance speech at Grant Park in Chicago, he addressed the world by reaffirming early 17th century concepts of American exceptionalism. In particular, he drew from the early ideology imparted by American settlers such as John Winthrop and noted that America still remains a beacon of hope, a shining “city on a hill,” that is referenced in Winthrop’s famous sermon given in 1630. President-elect Obama reaffirmed the importance of ideology when he cited U.S. power as coming from “our enduring ideals: democracy, opportunities and unyielding hope” (Obama 2008). As highlighted in chapter one this illustrates the frequent use of ideology in the political rhetoric of foreign policy.

While these values play a rhetorical role in motivating and justifying policy decisions, critics of U.S. foreign policy cite a discrepancy between U.S. rhetoric and political action. The implementation of new solutions, such as the development policies that emerged during the Cold War, were criticized by publics in the developing world as lacking innovation and reflecting ethnocentric ideals inherent in 19th and early 20th century policies (Hunt 1988, 166). Some charge U.S. foreign policy towards the developing world as “condescending and paternalistic by assuming American insights were superior to those authorities in developing nations” (Hunt 1988, 166). Reform of soft power policies such as assistance to the developing world has remained a contentious issue as opponents cite the U.S. rhetoric of international development, to uplift and regenerate less privileged nations, as a way for the U.S. to gain dominance and tutelage reminiscent of previously aggressive foreign policies. This suspicion of U.S. intentions presents a credibility
challenge that must be met by public diplomacy activities that make long-term investments and build mutual understanding.

The 21st century has brought about a new global struggle against extremist ideology and violence that must be met by reaching out to youth audiences, closed societies and grassroots leaders. It is through public diplomacy programs such as the people to people exchange of scholars and professionals that the U.S. reaches out to 165 countries around the world with the intent of building mutual understanding. Evaluations of these programs reflect that they are a key component to “acting” on the rhetorical promises made by policymakers. Programs that focus on citizen diplomacy allow dialog to be generated with closed societies. For example, in 2008, after an almost 30-year hiatus, a “12 member delegation from the Iranian Junior Weightlifting Federation” was brought to the U.S. to train with U.S.A. Weightlifting in Colorado (Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs 2008). It is through credible public diplomacy at the grassroots level that the divide between rhetoric and action can be bridged. While public diplomacy has been primarily used as a communications and public relations tool, substantive activities that demonstrate a commitment to American values will become increasingly important in winning over international publics and building up U.S. soft power.

The organizational politics analyzed in theme two illustrate that the historical catalyst for public diplomacy institutions was wartime coordination of international communication. This historical precedent has taken root and shaped contemporary public diplomacy which continues to be driven primarily by a response to wartime threats. This near-term policy focus has produced institutions which have a narrow mandate tied to
wartime agendas and goals. Consequently, the fate of institutions such as CPI, OWI and USIA, have been tied to temporary needs that make them disposable when wartime policies wind down.

Early institutions of public diplomacy were insolated from the policy making process and set a precedent for the limited role public diplomacy would have in foreign policy planning. Consequently policymakers have viewed these organizations as implementing agencies and left them on the periphery of the foreign policy making process. Because the historical function of public diplomacy has been to serve as a tool for wartime policies, public diplomacy institutions have characteristically been temporary, lacked sustainable institutional knowledge and served as a mouthpiece for foreign policy. While institutions such as USIA had a long-term mission to build “mutual understanding” around the world, public diplomacy’s function is still viewed through a wartime lens and tied to near-term policy goals. As this function becomes increasingly institutionalized through the State Department, a public diplomacy niche will need to be carved out in foreign policy if it is to be included into the policy making process.

The competitive pressures highlighted in chapter three reinforce the near-term characteristic of public diplomacy efforts. The historical motivators for public diplomacy are directly linked to pressures from rivalry during times of conflict. As wartime rivals began to capitalize on the power of rhetoric and media, the U.S. recognized the need to counteract their propaganda. The rise of competitive ideologies, such as communism and fascism, brought on a war of polar ideologies that increasingly required weapons of advocacy in the form of communication with foreign publics. With this acknowledgment,
there was a rise in the use of media for government purposes. The governments operation of media outlets was initially contentious because it made commercial media outlets fearful of government competition. Resistance from the private sector focused the scope of public diplomacy efforts to temporary near-term activities that were less competitive with commercial media.

In addition to pressure from stakeholders, the rise of the information age increased the importance of public diplomacy as the world became more intertwined. The advance of technology such as the internet has produced a climate where individuals and non-state actors are increasingly a large part of the political landscape. The internet has increased the power of the individual by enabling them to reach a mass audience, communicate and receive rapid feedback, mobilize supporters and access a wealth of knowledge. As technology inundates the world with messages, it presents new challenges and competition for public diplomacy efforts. Public diplomacy must increasingly be seen as credible and consistent with policies. In a post 9/11 world the rhetoric must match the action.

The fourth theme on leadership personalities reflects both the power of executive leadership and the role leadership can play in the future of public diplomacy. Historically, presidential leadership has been critical to the establishment of public diplomacy institutions. However, it has become increasingly less common for Presidents to have an interest in the long-term strategy and role of public diplomacy in foreign policy. Internal champions at the State Department and leadership on the overarching structure of public diplomacy are necessary to make it a more central part of foreign policy as opposed to an after-thought. This was famously illustrated by former USIA director, Edward Murrow, is
famously reported to have told President Kennedy, “Mr. President, if you want me in on the landings, I'd better be there for the takeoffs” (Murrow 1961). The ability to provide long-term proactive strategies has been a challenge for public diplomacy under its current structure and role.

As policy makers and executive leadership begin to respond to the recommendations of scholars and practitioners, they must understand that leadership on public diplomacy needs to come from the top through an executive initiative or through the creation of a public diplomacy position reporting directly to the president. Despite the focus on four year agendas and priorities, presidents have the authority of executive order, the influence to set a precedent and the drive to leave a successful legacy. The political capital ascribed to a president is critical to establishing a long-term vision for public diplomacy. As with Eisenhower’s executive approval that would later lead to the creation of USIA, a seemingly temporary vision or policy reform can have a positive long-term impact on the future of public diplomacy.

**Recommendations**

Reports from scholars and practitioners after 9/11 called for an updated approach to public diplomacy in the 21st century. As concerns crop up over the perceived militarization of public diplomacy in the 21st century, remembering the genesis of public diplomacy institutions may aid in helping reform existing systems. Public diplomacy agencies were created due to wartime pressures and ingrained in public diplomacy institutions is a near-term and forward-looking focus driven by four underlying themes: ideology, organizational politics, competitive pressure and leadership personalities. As the new administration looks
at reforms in foreign policy, a priority should be providing leadership on a clear and consistent role for public diplomacy within the foreign policy apparatus.

In the testimony, “Implementing Smart Power: Setting an Agenda for National Security Reform,” scholars Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and recommended Congress “create and fund a new institution outside of government that could help tap into expertise in the private and nonprofit sectors to improve U.S. strategic communication from an outside-in approach” (U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations 2008, 9). The concept of an independent public diplomacy agency has been echoed by a variety of studies, scholarly reviews and taskforce reports. For example, the Defense Science Board suggested this center could conduct “independent polling, research and analysis on U.S. Government priorities; promote a dialogue of ideas through mutual exchanges; and shape communications campaigns to help shape foreign attitudes” (U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations 2008, 9). These recommendations fall under the scope, bandwidth and expertise of public diplomacy practitioners. If the role of public diplomacy in foreign affairs is redefined in terms of a long-term strategy, the ability to measure its effectiveness would improve. The Defense Science Board acknowledged concerns that public diplomacy has been focused on near-term policies and believes the solution may be in a center that should have an independent board serving as a “heat shield” from near-term political pressures (U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations 2008, 9).

In the global village where communication with foreign publics is both intentional and unintentional, effective public diplomacy must rely less on rhetoric and more on action.
Long-term efforts are critical to the success of public diplomacy because they employ the tools of cultural and citizen diplomacy through “exchanges of ideas, peoples and information through person-to-person educational and cultural exchanges” (U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations 2008, 9). The implementation of solutions, such as the development policy that emerged during the Cold War, lack innovation and continue to be cited as reflecting outdated policy rooted in 19th and 20th century politics.

As we look toward meeting new challenges, it will require innovative policies that target the root causes of conflict. A successful example of innovative policy is the Marshall Plan which brought new meaning to educational exchange by creating “large-scale overseas operations in technical assistance and economic aid that boosted a plethora of exchanges that relied extensively on university resources” (Bu 1999, 395). Because of the large scale of overseas operations, economic, military and academic exchange programs were all interrelated. Hence, early public diplomacy programs, such as academic exchanges, played a large part in reconstructing Europe because they brought the following:

. . . hundreds of thousands of technical and industrial trainees as well as traditional foreign students and scholars to the United States from Europe and the “underdeveloped” countries of Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and Africa, as the United States reached the needs of the masses of the underprivileged. (Bu 1999, 396)

The Marshall Plan’s combination of economic aid, technical assistance distributed to “underdeveloped” countries and public diplomacy helped to define modern day development policy and provides a successful example of the role public diplomacy activities can have in creating long-term regional stability.
While some scholars, practitioners and policymakers have called for the revival of USIA, new models of public diplomacy, focusing on private sector engagement, are emerging within the government. Government agencies such as the State Department, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of Commerce have spear-headed efforts to actively engage and form partnerships with the private sector. While public-private partnerships have historically been focused on near-term policies and ad hoc projects, agencies are increasingly reaching out to the private sector for long-term engagement. For example, in April of 2008 the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs launched a public-private partnership initiative to express their willingness to partner with the private sector to leverage resources for long-term public diplomacy programs that build mutual understanding around the world through people to people exchanges (U.S. Department of State 2008). As the global economic crisis impacts all sectors there is likely to be an increase in public-private partnerships that leverage resources, scale the impact of programs and reach targeted audiences.

Particularly in times of war, near-term policy is often prefaced in terms of America’s commitment to fundamental ideals and moral responsibility. In this form, we see that most public diplomacy policies reflect near-term goals. However, rhetoric for long-term policies tend to be couched in general, overarching terms such as “building mutual understanding.” While this slightly more generic description appeals to a wider international audience, it remains intangible for policy makers who must decide where to cut budgets during economic crisis, succeed during times of war and garner domestic support for foreign policies. If long-term public diplomacy activities are to be expanded,
they must reflect some of the common ingredients that gain support from policy makers: a clear call to action, a concise mission and a moral authority used to justify the long-term vision. These ingredients are typically found in near-term policies that are driven by congress or an administration. New reforms in public diplomacy should employ these elements to avoid falling prey to budget-cuts. Without providing policy-makers and other key stakeholders a tangible understanding of the role long-term public diplomacy efforts play in foreign policy, it will continue to remain on the fringes of foreign affairs.

While military might is critical to the security of our nation, the challenges of the 21st century cannot be won with hard power alone. If the U.S. is to retain global leadership, it must adapt successfully to the new challenges of the 21st century and address the underlying cause of issues such as terrorism, human rights violations and limitations on freedom of expression. Winning wars of hearts and minds requires a marriage between hard and soft power that produces smart power. As the U.S. seeks to enhance its global power, deter future wars and build a more peaceful world, the maintenance of hard power must be coupled with an increase in the soft power tools of long-term public diplomacy.
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