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Geoffrey Cowan and Amelia Arsenault

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Moving from Monologue to Dialogue to Collaboration: The Three Layers of Public Diplomacy

By
GEOFFREY COWAN
and
AMELIA ARSENAULT

For a number of years, commentators and professionals have noted that effective public diplomacy requires that state and private actors communicate with the people of other nations by moving from monologue to dialogue. This article argues that both monologue and dialogue are essential public diplomacy tools and that collaboration is a third layer of public diplomacy that should also be examined. Collaboration, defined in this article as initiatives that feature cross-national participation in a joint venture or project with a clearly defined goal, may in certain instances be a more effective public diplomacy technique than either monologue or dialogue. By examining related social science research, this article seeks to start a systematic examination of the circumstances in which each of these three layers of public diplomacy—monologue, dialogue, and collaboration—is most appropriate.

Keywords: public diplomacy; monologue; dialogue; collaboration; social capital

Over the past decade, numerous scholars and practitioners have spoken about the need to move from a monologue- to a dialogue-based pubic diplomacy (e.g., Riordan 2004; Council on Foreign Relations 2002). In 1997, the United States Information Agency (USIA)

Geoffrey Cowan is a university professor and holds the Annenberg Family Chair in Communication Leadership at the University of Southern California's (USC's) Annenberg School for Communication, where he also directs the Center on Communication Leadership. He served as dean of the USC Annenberg School from 1996 to 2007. Before coming to USC, he served under President Clinton as director of the Voice of America from 1994 to 1996. His books include See No Evil: The Backstage Battle over Sex and Violence on Television *and* The People v. Clarence Darrow: The Bribery Trial of America's Greatest Lawyer.

Amelia Arsenault is a doctoral candidate and the Wallis Annenberg Graduate Research Fellow at the USC Annenberg School. She is also a research associate at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy at the Annenberg School. Before beginning her graduate studies, she served as the film coordinator for the Zimbabwe International Film Festival Trust in Harare, Zimbabwe.

formally changed its mission statement, placing dialogue at the center of its activities.[1] Monologic (i.e., one-way) communication and dialogue (i.e., two-way or multidirectional) communication are essential and, at times, irreplaceable public diplomacy tools. However, there is a third form of engagement that scholars and practitioners of public diplomacy have generally overlooked. Collaboration—defined here as initiatives in which people work together on a joint venture or project—provides an equally critical and, in certain cases, more effective approach to engaging with foreign publics.

Each of these three "layers" of public diplomacy—monologue, dialogue, and collaboration—is essential at certain times and under certain situations. Nothing can match the poetry, clarity, emotional power, and memorability of a beautifully crafted speech or proclamation. Nothing helps build mutual understanding as well as a thoughtful dialogue. And nothing creates a sense of trust and mutual respect as fully as a meaningful collaboration.

The following analysis examines each layer's strengths and limitations and explores the appropriate conditions for each. It is designed to complement, rather than to replace existing typologies and approaches. Regardless of how individual governments bureaucratically divide their international outreach campaigns and initiatives, public diplomacy activities—whether short term and reactive or long term and proactive—are most effective when executed with an eye for the best means of engaging with and building credibility among foreign publics. As Jan Melissen (2005b) and others have pointed out, a focus on relationship building at every level is what can and should separate public diplomacy from propaganda, lobbying, and public relations. By examining the best ways, means, and times to utilize monologue, dialogue, and collaboration, this article attempts to encourage a more systematic and nuanced appreciation for the outreach mechanisms available to governments.

Diplomats have long recognized the singular role of public pronouncements and other forms of *monologue* designed for mass audiences in other countries, using one-way communication forms and outlets that are inherently self-contained. For example, President John F. Kennedy had a unique impact when he stood on the balcony of Berlin's City Hall in the wake of the Berlin Wall's construction and said,

> Two thousand years ago the proudest boast was *civis romanus sum* [I am a Roman citizen]. Today, in the world of freedom, the proudest boast is "Ich bin ein Berliner." . . . All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and, therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words "Ich bin ein Berliner!" (Platt 1993, 46)

His words were intended to inspire those in the Soviet Union as well as people living in Berlin. Some deemed them a bit too provocative. But they were inspirational as only political oratory—or a monologue—can be.[2] A quarter of a century later, another iconic monologic moment took place in Berlin when Ronald Reagan stood in front of the Brandenburg Gate and said, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

There are often times, however, when it makes more sense to try to engage in a *dialogue*, to participate in the exchange of ideas and information. As is explored in some detail later, both practical experience and empirical research demonstrate the benefits of dialogue as a mechanism for improving relationships across social boundaries. Regardless of political orientation or background, when people talk to one another they may learn about and learn from their different perspectives and experiences, and they are affected by the knowledge (or belief) that their views are being taken into account.

Collaboration, the third layer in this typology, refers to initiatives and outreach campaigns that feature an effort by citizens of different countries to complete a common project or achieve a common goal. Anecdotal and historical evidence, as well as research into social capital by Coleman (1988), Putnam (2000), and many others, has illustrated that across a wide array of conditions, associations and partnerships that attempt to bridge social and political divides can foster trust and understanding, and can sometimes ameliorate the effects of violence and political tension. As John Stuart Mill put it, "A neighbor, not being an ally or an associate, since he is never engaged in any common undertaking for joint benefit, is therefore only a rival" (quoted in Putnam 2000, 337). Whether working together on small projects or on large ones, participants can learn from each other's skills; they learn to respect each other; and they may find that they have common ground in at least one area of importance to them.

In this typology, each mode of public diplomacy has particular advantages for particular situations, and those concerned with the subject should think about the best times and places to use each, either by itself or in combination. Context is, of course, critical. Each "layer" of public diplomacy is heavily contingent on the needs of the moment, the characteristics of the communicator and the target audience, and the conditions of their interaction. A communication formulated by a president has different implications than one issued by a media celebrity or social advocate, and people from different backgrounds, different governmental systems, and different religions receive it differently. Moreover, identifying the appropriate mode and method of engagement is heavily conditioned by changes in the global communication sphere and the realities of the "new public diplomacy" (Melissen 2005a).

Today, a greatly expanded number of private groups and actors are participating in outreach initiatives across boarders. Transnational monologues, dialogues, and partnerships take place every day, both within and outside of the boundaries of official government-initiated or -sponsored public diplomacy. These private initiatives can complement and/or provide models for formal state public diplomacy strategies—or, in certain circumstances, undermine the government's goals. Governments should be actively aware of and responsive to these alternate or competing communication flows to encourage and/or support positive developments and to correct misinformation and engage in dialogue when necessary. Keeping these realities in mind, the remainder of this article provides a preliminary consideration of the strengths and limitations of each of the three layers of public diplomacy.

Monologue

Critics frequently decry the United States' (and other nations') reliance on monologic, one-way communication to advocate foreign policy strategies. Indeed, dialogue and monologue are commonly presented in opposition, or in juxtaposition, to one another. For example, the influential 2002 Council on Foreign Relations report on public diplomacy called for "increased customized, 'two-way' dialogue, as contrasted to conventional one-way, 'push-down' mass communication" (p. 2). However, while one-way communication forms undoubtedly should be supplemented with other forms of engagement, there remains a critical time and place for *well-considered* monologic communication in public diplomacy. Since the time of Aristotle, scholars of rhetoric and communication have analyzed the capacity of speech to move citizens and countries toward peace, war, and reconciliation (e.g., Landtsheer and Feldman 2000). Dialogue and collaboration, while invaluable, will never fully supplant one-way communication strategies. Public diplomacy practitioners will continue to rely on monologic communication in many circumstances, whether out of choice or bureaucratic exigencies. Thus, monologue should not be considered in opposition to dialogue; rather, greater consideration should be given to when and how to best formulate and utilize one-way or self-contained modes of communication.

When a nation wants the people of the world to understand where it stands, there may be no better vehicle than a governmental address or a document. The American Declaration of Independence provides a classic example. It was intended to stir the souls of the people in the colonies and to present an indelible statement to the leaders of England. But it was also deliberately and self-consciously designed as a statement for the people of the world. As Jefferson's words explained so clearly, the Declaration was written because "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind" required the signers to "declare the causes which impel them to separation."

The Declaration of Independence, in this typology, was a monologue, as is any communication that is crafted by one individual or entity that does not allow for change in the content. Monologues take many forms. Speeches; editorials; proclamations; press releases; and cultural works such as movies, books, poetry, and works of visual art are all typically one-way, closed-container forms of communication. Such monologues can be used as the basis for dialogue after they enter the marketplace of ideas, and they may even lead to collaboration. But their function (whether intentional or not) is to convey an idea, a vision, or a perspective and to present it eloquently and clearly.

In today's world, however, while monologue is an essential advocacy tool that public diplomacy practitioners can and must use to raise awareness about their country's policies, identities, or values, deliberate advocacy is only a small component of the messages flowing across borders. The nature of the global communications environment makes it inevitable that (sometimes for better, sometimes for worse) one-way messages are transmitted transnationally on a daily, hourly, and even minute-to-minute basis. Such communications, more

often than not, take place outside the boundaries of formal public diplomacy programs. Popular entertainment products, global news flows, and the private circulation of information (and often misinformation) about the domestic sphere are just a few among many critical factors in shaping national reputations. There are many times when thoughtless or inadvertent forms of monologues, including those by private actors, or by public actors in private moments, contribute to a country's reputation abroad. Messages designed for domestic or private consumption may well reach international audiences who will interpret (or misinterpret) them according to their own experiences, cultures, and political needs.

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Politicians and other public figures around the world have learned the hard way the potential hazards of ignoring international audiences. For example, the decision of Italian Cabinet member Roberto Calderoli to wear a T-shirt printed with cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad on Italian state television at the height of the 2006 Danish cartoon controversy played a large role in prompting demonstrations, the burning of the Italian Embassy in Libya, and eventually his own dismissal. Indeed, typically the world will not distinguish between the word and deeds that officials make in a public capacity and those they make as private citizens. While serving as U.S. deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence, Lieutenant General William G. Boykin sparked international outrage when the details of his speeches at several American churches, made in what he maintained was a private capacity, were reported in the press. Speaking about an Islamic opponent, he told one congregation, "I knew my God was bigger than his. I knew that my God was a real God and his was an idol"; and later he framed the "war on terror" as a war "in the name of Jesus" (quoted in Ahrari 2003).

Since such comments know no national boundaries in today's world, practitioners should try to be sensitive wherever possible when composing monologic communications and should be willing to engage with and respond to the fallout from one-way communication flows that are outside the boundaries of government

control. Thus, monologue as a layer of public diplomacy can be a tool for advocacy but is also essential for correcting and adapting to inadvertent or private one-way communication flows that if left unanswered could undermine transnational relationships and national reputations.

It will never be possible (and in some cases would not be desirable) to end all unpopular foreign policies and/or to stop the transmission of all offensive material across boarders; nor will it be possible to prevent all communications that are politically provocative and even incendiary. However, those charged with thinking about public diplomacy should, where possible, try to use these points of discord as an opportunity to turn a monologue into a dialogue by denouncing the statement or hosting discussion and forums for debate. When a public official makes an offensive statement, even in a private capacity, a nation can help to ameliorate the damage by issuing a strong rebuke from his or her superiors, through attacks by opposition parties or the press, through government hearings, and in extreme cases, even by dismissal.

When thinking about monologue as a layer of public diplomacy, practitioners should be willing to engage with and respond to one-way communication flows that violate or undermine the official public diplomacy perspective; but they should also be mindful that presenting a united national communication strategy is not only impossible but also often undesirable. Stressing that a nation contains dissenting voices and that it is not a monolith can, at times, be one of the most effective tools in the public diplomacy arsenal. Strategies that highlight diversity have at least two important virtues: they highlight a nation's commitment to democratic debate, and they may help to ensure that those who disapprove of a regime or its policies do not automatically hate the nation or its people. During the 1950s, a time when America's segregationist policies were widely denounced around the world, the USIA-sponsored Jazz tours featuring black artists were among some of the most successful outreach programs in the history of U.S. public diplomacy. In 1955 Felix Belair, the Stockholm correspondent for the *New York Times*, wrote, "America's secret weapon is a blue note in a minor key," and labeled Louis Armstrong as the United State's "most effective ambassador" (Von Eschen 2004, 10). More recently, the State Department sponsored a successful Middle Eastern tour of Ozomatli, a band that has been highly critical of the Bush administration and the Iraq war and that is well known for playing at political demonstrations and labor rallies. The civil rights movement in the United States and the antiapartheid movement in South Africa are other examples of societal dissent that may have played a critical role in increasing sympathy for some facets of a country and/or its citizens, if not for its policies (Dudziak 2000). Of course, improving governmental reputation remains a high priority for many public diplomacy practitioners. However, by expanding the range of voices and opinions that flow across borders, governments may help to contain negative opinion of state governments while retaining positive perceptions of the nation as a whole. As will be addressed in greater detail in the following section on dialogue, the benefits of engaging with and at times highlighting dissent and diversity are not limited to circumstances where monologue is the mode of communication of choice or necessity.

Although monologue or self-contained presentations have a vital and unavoidable role in public diplomacy, they also have severe limitations. One-way communications do not provide an opportunity to listen or allow for feedback or critical responses from audiences. Numerous communication studies have documented the unpredictability of audience reception (e.g., Katz and Liebes 1985; Ang 1985). Public diplomacy campaigns have experienced similar results. For example, the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs Communications Bureau launched the Promoting Canada Abroad Initiative built around the slogan, "Canada-Cool-Connected." The strategy included speeches, press releases, Internet publications, and other tools. However, eventually the campaign was discarded because in practice it was found that "cool" evoked connections with "icy" and "cold" (which are, of course, features of the Canadian climate) rather than easygoing and trendy (Batora 2005, 6-7).

Monologic communication is particularly complicated for states with well-established reputations. Citizens around the world who have never set foot in the United States may consider themselves to be experts on the American way of life and American culture, for example, because they are exposed to images of the United States on a daily basis—on television, in the news, in movies, in song, and in products such as Coca Cola and McDonald's. This is also true for other countries with strong cultural and political identities.[3] Moreover, traditional one-way public diplomacy messages are frequently treated with suspicion and are undermined by legacies of colonialism and economic and social imbalances (Leonard 2002, 6-7).

One-way communication strategies are important at critical moments and for day-to-day explanations about policy. Sometimes they can also help to build credibility, as the BBC, Voice of America, and other international broadcasters have done for years with reports that are truthful, even when describing embarrassing facts about the nation and/or government that sponsors the broadcasts. But it is at least as important for countries to develop communication techniques that focus on relationship building of the kind that only dialogues and collaborations can achieve.

Dialogue

In 1961, then–Vice President Lyndon Johnson journeyed to Pakistan on a USIA-directed goodwill visit. This trip was remembered, not for Johnson's speeches, but because of his unlikely exchange with a barefoot camel herder named Bashir Ahmad. Walking through the crowd, Johnson engaged in a brief conversation with Ahmad, ending with the remark, "Y'all come visit me in the United States." The next day a local newspaper praised Johnson for reaching out "to the man with no shirt on his back" and for inviting Ahmad to America. USIA officials in Pakistan warned Johnson's aides that if he did not make good on the invitation it would create a major public diplomacy disaster. Ahmad visited Johnson and toured the United States and was even given a free truck by the

Ford Motor Company. He returned to Pakistan a hero, and USIA officials considered his visit one of the greatest successes in the American outreach to Pakistan (Dizard 2004, 95-96; *Time Magazine* 1961). Of course, the story of Ahmad is unlikely to be replicated. But it illustrates the potential goodwill that can be gained when people feel that governments (or government representatives) are interested in engaging with them or with people like them.

A number of public diplomacy scholars and practitioners have called for increased cross-national dialogue, the creation of an "international public sphere," and a "conversation of cultures" (Lynch 2000; Blaney and Inayatullah 1994). Leaders of public diplomacy efforts ranging from U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, to German President Roman Herzog, to Arab League Secretary-General Amir Musa have emphasized the importance of dialogue (Riordan 2004; Lynch 2005). While dialogue between cultures is an admirable goal, it begins with dialogue between individuals, whether they are representatives of governments or private citizens meeting in a hotel conference room or in an online chat room. These dialogic relationships provide the building blocks through which a broader "dialogue between civilizations" can evolve.

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There are a number of initiatives that stress the potentially transformative power of dialogue in conflict resolution and prevention. For example, the Talking Drum project, based in Liberia, hosts interethnic peace-building and reconciliation workshops throughout West Africa. Search for Common Ground (SFCG) is a complementary initiative that engages West African youth proactively in the peace process by providing opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and creating neutral platforms for debate about the reasons and remedies for the violence that still plagues Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. In another more widely publicized program, Seeds of Peace brings together teenagers from hostile or "enemy" states such as India and Pakistan or Israel and the Palestinian territories in a summer camp setting for three weeks. In between sports and other recreational activities, participants break into smaller groups for discussion sessions.

Philosophers, political scientists, and public relations scholars have produced a wealth of theories on what precisely constitutes dialogue (e.g., Habermas 1987; Buber 1958; Ellinor and Gerard 1998). In this context, *dialogue* refers to myriad situations in which ideas and information are exchanged and communication is *reciprocal* and *multidirectional*. There are multiple forms and multiple levels of dialogue. Ideas and information can be exchanged in formal summits attended by elites; in academic or professional conferences; in call-in talk shows; on interactive Web sites; and through citizen participation in cross-cultural sports, cinema, and arts projects.

Martin Buber (1958), one of the most influential theorists of dialogic communication, makes a useful distinction between a "technical dialogue," in which ideas and information are exchanged, and a true dialogue, in which participants willingly and openly engage in true relationship-building exchanges in which feelings of control and dominance are minimized. Both a dialogue and a technical dialogue can be useful to advancing public diplomacy goals since sometimes the very act of exchanging information, or illustrating a willingness to exchange information, can lay the groundwork for deeper attachments.

Starting in 1994, in recognition of the ways that technology had made it easier to incorporate call-in talk show programs on radio and television, the Voice of America announced its intention to move from "monologue to dialogue." It did so based on the hypothesis that people tend to listen more closely and to be more receptive when their questions are being addressed and their comments heard, and when they believe that they, or people like them, are a part of the conversation. Moreover, the agency postulated that any message coming from America—and, by extension, from any nation—would be improved if there were a willingness to refine it in the face of comments and challenges from around the world. As one manifestation of this approach, Voice of America started to air call-in shows in more than a dozen languages.[4] Some people worried that such open container programs would create risks since it is not possible to predict who will call in or what they will say. But more than a decade later, these shows are still flourishing.

Germany's international broadcasting arm, Deutsche Welle, also instituted several initiatives centered on incorporating dialogic communication into its broadcasting strategies. One of Deutsche Welle's most popular programs is *Dialogue of Cultures*, which features topical discussions by prominent thinkers in Germany and the Arab world (Zollner 2006, 174). A study conducted by Lucassen and Zollner (2004) found that listeners were incredibly enthusiastic about the broadcast strategy and praised Deutsche Welle for its attempts to "establish friendly relationships with Arab peoples" (p. 99).

These talk shows are examples of the ways in which it is possible to move beyond monologue- to dialogue-based public diplomacy. The success of dialogic models of public diplomacy such as these call-in talk shows suggests the power of addressing the universal human desire to be heard.

Voices of the Poor, a landmark World Bank survey of sixty thousand people around the world living below the poverty line, drives home the fact that the need to be heard is a fundamental characteristic of human nature (World Bank 1999).

Regardless of nationality, race, ideology, religion, and circumstance, researchers found that those surveyed were united by their desire for a "voice." While the study underlined their desire to be heard in their own communities and societies, it seems fair to assume that people around the world would like to be heard by leaders in neighboring countries as well as by America and other industrialized nations. By providing opportunities for people to express themselves and to be heard, and to engage in a dialogue, those concerned with public diplomacy can begin to address that need.

While there has been very little, if any, experimental research on the impact of dialogue in relation to public diplomacy, a century of communication research demonstrates that the need to be heard represents an almost universal human characteristic. Reciprocal communication is integral to lasting friendships between individuals, and many of the most effective and esteemed leaders are those who listen more than or as much as they speak (April 1999). People respond more favorably to requests or impositions if they are first engaged in conversation (Dolinski, Nawrat, and Rudak 2001). Democratization scholars also consistently find that individuals are more likely to feel favorably toward those with opposing viewpoints and consider political outcomes as fair, if not correct, if they have the opportunity to engage in discussion and debate (Delli, Carpini, Lomax, and Jacobs 2004; Lind and Tyler 1988; Tyler 1994). Public diplomacy practitioners can benefit from understanding this common desire to be heard and its benefits.

During his 2004 reelection campaign, President Bush stressed his unwillingness to submit U.S. foreign policy decisions to a "global test," leading both presidential candidates to assert that they would never give other countries or entities a veto over American decision making. But while no nation wants to give a veto power to others, there are times when it makes sense to give people from other societies a voice rather than a vote. Dialogue may or may not lead to changed foreign policy positions or changed opinions about those foreign policy decisions. However, a willingness to listen and to show a respect for thoughtful, alternate voices may help to ameliorate conflicts, or at least facilitate understanding of positions taken by helping participants to articulate their policies in more easily understandable terms.

One of the United States' greatest proponents of academic and cultural exchanges, Senator William J. Fulbright, argued that "in the long course of history, having people who understand your thought is much greater security than another submarine" (quoted in Simpson 1988). Fulbright's statement stresses the need for people to *understand*, though not necessarily to *agree* with, a nation's position. Dialogue should first and foremost be approached as a method for improving relationships and increasing understanding, not necessarily for reaching consensus or for winning an argument. According to Buber (1958), true dialogue occurs when both parties enter the relationship with mutual respect and a willingness to listen and, most important, view their interactions as the goal of the relationship. As public relations scholars Kent and Taylor (1998) pointed out, dialogue in its ideal form is not just a conversation but the basis for the formation of a relationship between communicators: it is not just a process but a product (p. 323).

Largely because America is the world's only superpower, people everywhere want and even sometimes demand more pathways for dialogue with the American government and the American people and attempt to create pathways when they feel there is no other recourse. In recent years, concerned citizens abroad and in the United States have created dozens of Web sites in an attempt to provide a private platform for dialogue with the United States, including Theworldvotes.org, www.apologiesaccepted.com, www.sorryeverybody.com, loveushateus.com, and the OpenDemocracy: My Letters to America Project. The desire for a greater voice is not limited to those who want to be heard by the United States. On issues ranging from trade to human rights to military conflicts, people have a similar desire to be heard by other global powers and by the leaders and people in neighboring countries and regional powers.

The key here is to find a way to listen, to make people feel that they are being heard and that they have a voice, without also suggesting that they have a vote. At the very least, listening can help governments find a better way of articulating policies that might otherwise be needlessly unpopular.

Scholars in the disciplines of communication, social psychology, and political science offer a range of evidence that dialogue, under the right conditions, can be integral to bridging social barriers and fostering or improving goodwill across groups.[5] Monologue is critical for providing information and inspiration. But information, no matter how artfully crafted, has a limited ability to influence individuals to discard their preconceptions or stereotypes. Dialogue as a layer of public diplomacy is critical both as a symbolic gesture that emphasizes that reasonable people can find reasonable ways to disagree and as a mechanism for overcoming stereotypes and forging relationships across social boundaries.

In 1954, Allport outlined a "contact hypothesis" that posited that appropriately structured interaction is much more effective than information provision in overcoming stereotypes and healing social cleavages across groups. He argued that contact is generally most effective when four conditions are met: (1) participants have equal status or ability to participate, (2) they have common goals such as a sports team or the improvement of a neighborhood association, (3) the contact is free from competition between their respective groups, and (4) the contact is supported by social norms and/or community authority. Over the past half century, many social psychologists have found support for Allport's hypothesis. Research into the effects of desegregated public housing in the 1950s, for example, found that opportunities for dialogue were critical to ameliorating prejudices. Favorable racial attitudes developed among only one-third of the white tenants who merely had casual greetings with their black neighbors. But half of those who entered into conversations, and three-fourths who had multiple interactions, developed positive racial views (Wilner, Walkley, and Cook 1955, as cited in Pettigrew 1998). Similar results have been found across a wide array of subjects including Chinese students in the United States (Chang 1973), interracial work environments in South Africa (Bornman and Mynhardt 1991), the elderly (Caspi 1984), and people living with HIV (Werth and Lord 1992).[6]

Collaboration

Both monologue and dialogue, under the right circumstances, provide invaluable tools for promoting foreign policy and furthering cross-national understanding, respect, and relationships. However, those concerned with articulating and formulating public diplomacy policies and theories have, to date, largely overlooked (though many public and private actors have practiced) a critical and often more effective means of engaging foreign publics—cross-national collaboration. There are various forms of collaboration: some focus on solving shared problems or conflicts, some focus on advancing shared visions, and some focus on the completion of a physical project (Gray 1989; Logdon 1991).[7] Collaboration as a form of public diplomacy refers to initiatives in which participants from different nations participate in a project together. These projects can be short term with a clear endpoint, such as putting on a play or writing a piece of music; or larger in scale and long term such as side-by-side participation in natural disaster reconstruction efforts.

Collaborative projects almost without exception include dialogue between participants and stakeholders, but they also include concrete and typically easily identifiable goals and outcomes that provide a useful basis and structure upon which to form more lasting relationships. Individuals who engage in conversation may each leave the room with a better understanding of the other. Individuals who build or achieve something together—whether it be in building a home, a school, or a church; in composing a piece of music; or in playing side by side on a sports team—are forever bound by their common experience and/or achievement.

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A number of authors have written about the potential of "superordinate" goals to transform conflict situations. Coined by Muzafer Sherif in 1958, superordinate

goals refer to "goals that are compelling and highly appealing to members of two or more groups in conflict but cannot be attained by the resources and energies of groups separately" (pp. 349-50). In a study of conflict resolution among children, Sherif found that cooperative projects were critical in facilitating reconciliation. Citing a number of successful collaborative endeavors, Stephen Ryan (2007) similarly argued that superordinate goals are a critical method of creating a new playing field in which trust and understanding can be fostered across social fractures. For example, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) launched the Action for Cooperation and Trust, which brings together Greek and Turkish Cypriotes from both sides of the Green Line to work on common projects that benefit the island as a whole. In Lebanon, the Unity through Sports program brings together youths across religious lines to play side by side in sporting events. Different Drums, a program in Northern Ireland, connects Catholic and Protestant musicians who play together while "still marching to the beat of different drums." These are a few examples of projects, not typically considered "public diplomacy," that illustrate the potential of collaboration to bridge divides and strengthen relationships.

While those studying conflict resolution often tout the benefits of collaboration, an extensive literature review failed to identify scholars and practitioners who have directly examined the public diplomacy benefits of collaborative and cooperative projects involving members of different nation-states. Government reports, particularly since 9/11, call for increased government–private sector collaboration in conducting public diplomacy campaigns (e.g., Djerejian Report 2003; Government Accountability Office 2006). Ben-Meir (2004, 2005) pointed to the public diplomacy benefits of funding development projects in the Middle East that feature intracommunity cooperation. In "British Public Diplomacy in an 'Age of Schisms,'" Leonard and Small (2005) touched on the benefits of collaboration in the context of a broader discussion about the need for trust-building activities. However, their main point involves the need for greater collaboration among public diplomacy practitioners from different nations in the promotion of joint policy goals, an opinion echoed by Melissen (2005b) and Ross (2003). These are all critical points. In short, public diplomacy scholars and practitioners can usefully pay more attention to international collaborations, not only as platforms for public diplomacy, but as what can sometimes be *the* most important form of public diplomacy.

The benefits of collaboration have been recognized by a number of leading scholars across a range of conditions. Research into team building, business cooperation, social capital, conflict prevention, democracy building, and development all point to the potentially transformative power of collaborative endeavors for public diplomatic relationships. Contact studies have found that intergroup projects can serve as conduits for information, which contradict group biases and create external loyalties that reduce the importance of in-group membership and moderate pressures for conformity and radicalism (Nelson 1989). Studies conducted in Western and non-Western businesses have found that employees who work in collaborative projects evidence greater estimation of their coworkers and

superiors (Nelson 1989). Participation in collaboration can also enhance the external legitimacy of an organization where it helps to fulfill social norms and assuage the expectations of its stakeholders (DiMaggio 1988). In short, by participating in collaborative efforts, participants may gain the respect of their fellow collaborators, their supporters, and their constituents elsewhere.

Perhaps the greatest source of information about the benefits of collaboration can be found in the vast body of research into social capital. The core idea of social capital as advanced by Coleman (1988) and Putnam (2000) is that projects, networks, and partnerships, both within and between communities, have value because they breed social trust, foster norms of reciprocity, and create stores of goodwill that can prove invaluable during times of crisis. Over the past twenty years, those concerned with democracy building, international development, and community building have embraced social capital–related projects. The World Bank has placed social capital–building projects at the center of its development initiatives. For example, the World Bank is a prime funder of VELUGU, a program of the Society for the Eradication of Rural Poverty (SERP) that works through community coordinators to strengthen women's self-help groups and village organizations in the poorest Indian communities.[8] Following the 2004 tsunami, beneficiary groups of VELUGU proved invaluable in relief and reconstruction efforts.

Considerable debate remains about the ideal conditions for building social capital and the relative utility of bonding (intragroup) versus bridging (intergroup) social capital projects.[9] However, there is growing agreement that projects and associations that bridge racial, social, ethnic, gender, and national divides (1) are essential for democracy building; (2) increase social and political trust; and (3) can help ameliorate social, political, and ethnic conflict (Putnam 2000; Varshney 2003).

Several studies have illustrated that cooperation on common projects and participation in networks is not dependent on preexisting trust between participants but rather creates a virtuous circle. Participants in these networks form bonds of trust and thus become more likely to cooperate in future endeavors. For example, using data from the General Social Survey (GSS), Brehm and Rahn (1997) found that participation in civic associations was positively associated with interpersonal trust, providing one of the strongest relationships in their model. Moreover, Beem (1999) and others have argued that greater trust between individuals can foster greater societal trust: "trust between individuals thus becomes trust between strangers and trust of a broad fabric of social institutions; ultimately, it becomes a shared set of values, virtues, and expectations within society as a whole" (p. 20).

These studies also suggest that social capital projects can reinforce positive social norms and foster a spirit of community over individualism. In a macro-level study of both European and non-Western countries, Bjornskov (2003) found that the presence of strong networks and cooperative organizations was associated with reduced levels of corruption. Several investigations have also stressed the ability of bridging social capital to ameliorate ethnic conflict and improve social stability (e.g., Colletta and Cullen 2000; Varshney 2003). Looking at the development of

ethnic conflict in India over the course of the twentieth century, Varshney (2003) found that "vigorous associational life," if intercommunal, acted as a serious constraint on the polarizing strategies of elites (p. 2). In other words, ethnic conflict was less pronounced in areas of India with strong bridging social capital. Narayan (1999) conducted an international macro-analysis of levels of social capital within nation-states. He found that states that are the most economically prosperous and socially cohesive, with the highest governmental approval ratings, are overwhelmingly rich in "cross-cutting social capital" (i.e. groups and voluntary associations that cut across class, race, ethnic, and religious lines). Moreover, states and/or regions of states with failed governments that had flourishing bridging social capital were more prosperous and more likely to implement coping strategies that helped to ameliorate the problems of governmental breakdown (e.g., community-run schools, health clinics, and barter programs).

Certainly there are many examples of situations where a collaborative endeavor has failed or has bred unintended and sometimes undesirable consequences. Although collaboration has the potential to engender long-term positive relationships, not all collaborations realize this potential. There are several factors that may hinder the benefits of contacts made through collaborations. Many collaborations fail because a stakeholder feels disenfranchised, conflict derails the process, and/or parties either disagree or change their minds about the project goals (Gray 1989; Nelson 1989; Huxham and Vangen 2005; Lawrence, Hardy, and Phillips 2002). Cooperation generally necessitates compromise, and joint projects are often hindered by disagreements about best practices. Governments that must conform first to the demands of their domestic constituencies are often unable or unwilling to make those compromises. However, conflict negotiation between diplomats entails a number of externalities that can be avoided or at least mitigated in public diplomacy initiatives. The benefits of collaboration are often best achieved through projects with clearly identifiable and concrete outcomes, such as scientific discovery, the completion of a piece of music, or the building of a church or school.

There are multiple examples of scientific partnerships across cultural leadership groups that tackle world problems from AIDS prevention to global warming. Political groups meet together in world conferences and have formed hugely successful efforts such as the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. One notable effort at cultural collaboration involves what might be called "Muppet Diplomacy." The Sesame Workshop, owners and producers of *Sesame Street*, have created twenty-one different programs in various countries, always with local coproducers and collaborators. In each case, the program deals with local issues and local cultural norms. Muppet Diplomacy illustrates that collaboration can benefit participants but can also resonate with audiences in ways that one-way monologic communication rarely achieves. *Sesame Street* evolved out of American public broadcasting, and in many ways articulates values that America would like to project, but *Sesame Street* seems to be popular with local audiences because local collaborators provide it with local themes, characters, authenticity, and relevance.

Musical collaborations from jazz to hip-hop have succeeded in helping to bring participants closer together and resonating with audiences. An often-cited example is the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, founded by the Israeli conductor and pianist Daniel Barenboim and the late U.S.-based Palestinian writer and critic Edward Said, which is comprised of seventy-eight Jewish and Muslim musicians aged thirteen to twenty-six. The Orchestra travels around the world producing popular concerts and clinics. The words of Mini Zikri, an Egyptian violinist, are particularly telling. Speaking about his colleague, a female bassoonist from Tel Aviv, he noted that "images can be very misleading. The suicide bomber brings to mind a certain image, so does the military operation. But these must not be fixed in one's brain. Now when I see her again I think 'Here is my friend,' not 'Here is the Israeli person' " (Usher 2002).

Culture can serve as a subject of collaboration as well as an important driving force for regional partnerships. In the postapartheid era, South Africa has experienced notable success with its African Renaissance Campaign, a multifaceted program promoting pan-African economic liberalization and integration, democratization, and peace building underpinned by what Nelson Mandela envisioned as "the rediscovery of Africa's creative past to recapture the peoples' cultures [and] encourage artistic creativity" (Mandela 1994). The program draws upon the Ghanaian term *ubuntu,* which roughly translates into "I am human only through others." Using culture as a unifying theme, South Africa has asked Africans around the continent to collaborate on conferences, institutes, economic reforms (e.g., the New Economic Plan for African Democracy), and many other activities that draw upon a rediscovery and reincorporation of Africa's shared cultural identity.

Sports, particularly sporting events that feature cross-cultural or cross-national teams, can also provide fertile ground for relationship building. Aisam-Ul-Haq Qureshi, a Pakistani, and Amir Hadad, an Israeli, shocked the world when they formed a doubles team, playing together in the U.S. Open and Wimbledon in 2002 despite criticisms at home and abroad. The pair won the Arthur Ashe Humanitarian Award for promoting "tolerance through tennis." In July 2007, violence in Iraq paused as citizens spilled into the streets to celebrate the 2007 Asian Cup victory of the Iraqi national soccer team comprised of Shias, Sunnis, and Kurds. A man from Baghdad told the *International Herald Tribune*, "What governments could not do, they did. We want to show the world there is no Sunni, no Shia. They are political blocs; they are fighting among each other. Now you see Sunni, Shia, Kurd, Christian, Yazidi, everyone. We are like brothers watching the television together" (Farrell 2007). Of course, the celebration only provided a temporary reprieve from the brutal sectarian violence. Sadly, many of the team members refused to return to Iraq following their victory, fearing that if they played together on Iraqi soil they would become targets for assassination. Yet this event remains one of the few examples in contemporary Iraq that offers hope for national unity and remains a compelling example of the potential power of intergroup collaboration.

New Directions

There are numerous examples of transnational collaborations that could be encouraged and/or replicated and expanded by those involved with public diplomacy. There has long been an appreciation for the importance of "citizen diplomacy," or what some refer to as "track two diplomacy." People to People International, the International Visitors Leadership Program, and the Sino-Japan Friendship Center for Environmental Protection in Beijing are examples of organizations that focus on forging broader interconnections between citizens mainly through international exchange programs. Exchange programs are essential, and indeed some of the greatest alliances begin through participation in these initiatives. However, an effort could be made to expand citizen diplomacy beyond dialogue and exchanges to joint projects and collaborative endeavors.

The Internet and other new communication technologies also offer unprecedented opportunities for promoting cross-national collaborations as well as dialogue and monologic communications. Some countries are already recognizing the value of these communication technologies for information provision and dialogue-based initiatives. The German government has sponsored an online portal called Qantara ("The Bridge"), and similarly the Egyptian government launched IslamOnline to promote cross-cultural dialogue. Several countries including the United States are making efforts to reach out to the residents of Second Life, a virtual reality world, populated by upwards of 5 million users from around the world. Users walk around this "world" in the form of "avatars" (i.e., a virtual representation of himself or herself) interacting with other users, building communities, and even buying homes and starting virtual businesses. Sweden, Estonia, and the Maldives have established virtual embassies in Second Life designed to reach out to citizens of this virtual world.

Today, Web 2.0 applications, the rise of virtual worlds, and the growth of online gaming sites have made it possible for those concerned with public diplomacy to move beyond online information portals and outreach campaigns to include much more broadly based forms of collaboration. These evolving technologies and software applications will make it possible to blaze new frontiers. A number of amazing international collaborations are already taking place online. Musicians from around the world now participate in online jam sessions made possible by advances in Internet software. Wikipedia, an online collaborative encyclopedia, is now one of the top ten most visited Internet sites in the world, according to Alexa rankings. Software programmers collaborate without financial compensation or market incentives to make world-class software such as the Linux operating system, which is distributed freely to all as part of the "open source movement." As broadband and other newer technologies extend their capacities and their reach, public diplomacy practitioners will have the opportunity to explore how existing and new online avenues can facilitate all three layers of public diplomacy.

In this world of economic, political, and cultural interdependence, monologue, dialogue, and collaboration, when appropriately practiced, are all essential tools for effective public diplomacy, both online and offline. While governments participate and facilitate all three layers on a regular basis, each should be carefully studied, better understood, and more strategically incorporated into thinking about public diplomacy.

In this world of economic, political, and cultural interdependence, monologue, dialogue, and collaboration, when appropriately practiced, are all essential tools for effective public diplomacy, both online and offline.

The way in which each layer is employed will inevitably depend, in part, on the characteristics of the actors involved. While social science research provides ample evidence for the benefits and pitfalls of using each of these three layers, experimental and field research on the effects of all three, and of the best ways in which each can be used, is sorely needed. With a better understanding of the effects of each approach, practitioners of public diplomacy will be in a much better position to engage in their craft.

Notes

1. See also United States Information Agency Director Joseph Duffey's statement regarding the new charter, delivered before the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Relations on March 12, 1997: http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa42893.000/hfa42893_0.htm.

2. There is a widespread urban legend, popularized during the 1980s, that Kennedy's audience burst into laughter when he mangled the German words, telling the audience instead that "I am a jelly donut." The German word *Berliner* can denote either citizen of Berlin or a kind of jelly-filled pastry, but to Kennedy's audience his meaning was clear.

3. For a further discussion of these issues, see Batora (2005).

4. Geoffrey Cowan was director of the Voice of America from 1994 to 1996 and played a key role in developing these programs.

5. Christakis and Brahms (2003) have called for a boundary-spanning dialogue approach based on systems theory research. Bathany (2000) showed evidence for the need for twenty-first-century *agoras*, referring to the open political spaces in ancient Athens where all citizens were allowed to voice their opinions.

6. See Pettigrew (1998) for a detailed overview of contact theory research. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) also found that in a meta-analysis of 713 independent samples from 515 studies, intergroup contact typically reduces intergroup prejudice.

7. Historically, the word *collaboration* may have negative connotations, evoking associations with Nazi "collaborators" in World War II, or of collusion or dependency for scholars of international relations.

8. See http://go.worldbank.org/VEN7OUW280 for an overview of World Bank social capital–building projects.

9. There is also broad disagreement about whether social capital is in decline, how to remedy this decline, and the relative influence of media and other new technologies. However, the intention here is not to enter the broader debate on social capital, but rather to explore the implications of social capital research for public diplomacy.

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