

# Cultural Diplomacy: Hard to Define, but You'd Know It If You Saw It

---

AMBASSADOR CYNTHIA P. SCHNEIDER  
Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy  
Georgetown University

---

You see I am an enthusiast on the subject of the arts. But it is an enthusiasm of which I am not ashamed, as its object is to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation, to reconcile to them the respect of the world, and procure them its praise.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison

191

THOMAS JEFFERSON'S OBSERVATION TO JAMES MADISON, penned from Paris on 20 September 1785, still offers a good definition of cultural diplomacy. Jefferson, the statesman, scientist, and architect, recognized the potential for cultural expression to shape international opinion about the fledgling republic. Over two hundred years later in the post-9/11 era of opinion polls, Jefferson's argument remains relevant.<sup>1</sup>

Since 9/11 public diplomacy has emerged as a much discussed, if little understood, component of foreign policy. Public diplomacy consists of all a nation does to explain itself to the world, and cultural diplomacy—the use of creative expression and exchanges of ideas, information, and people to increase mutual understanding—supplies much of its content.<sup>2</sup> Most of the thirty-plus reports on public diplomacy issued in the last four years focus on improving process and structure at the expense of content.<sup>3</sup> With the exception of the commendable but largely ignored *Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy*, all neglect the role of cultural diplomacy.<sup>4</sup> If U.S. public diplomacy is measured according to the three “strategic imperatives” put forward by

---

CYNTHIA P. SCHNEIDER is Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy and Director of the Life Science and Society Initiative at Georgetown University. She is a non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Georgetown University, and at the Brookings Institution. Dr. Schneider served as the 61st Ambassador of the United States to the Kingdom of the Netherlands from August 1998 to June 2001.

Copyright © 2006 by the *Brown Journal of World Affairs*

Undersecretary of State Karen Hughes in testimony before the House Committee on International Relations (10 November 2005)—to offer a vision of hope, isolate and marginalize violent extremists, and foster a sense of common interest and values—then the report card is mixed at best. The image of the United States has declined steadily over the last five years, in the Muslim world as well as in Europe and Canada,<sup>5</sup> and U.S. citizens are increasingly viewed in the same negative light as U.S. policies.<sup>6</sup>

Discussions of the United States' declining image inevitably turn to public diplomacy. However, the expectation that public diplomacy can somehow repair the damage caused by unpopular policies is unreasonable and at odds with the fundamental long-term goals of increasing understanding and building relationships and trust. Experience has shown that using public diplomacy as a rapid response tactic tends only to alienate foreign publics even further. For example, a Southeast Asian diplomat told of a U.S. library that had opened six times during the 1960s, always in response to crisis. Each time the crisis abated, the library was shut down.<sup>7</sup> According to one Egyptian diplomat, "Cultural diplomacy emerges at times of crisis. But this should be a process of building bridges, not a one way street. Developing respect for others and their way of thinking—this is what cultural diplomacy does."<sup>8</sup>

The surge of interest in public diplomacy since the attacks of 9/11 reveals that in the United States public diplomacy is still primarily used as a response to crises. This article will examine aspects of the public diplomacy response to the crisis of 9/11 and will ask the following questions: What are the roles of public and cultural diplomacy today, and what should they be? Recognizing that world opinion always will be significantly shaped by policy, how can cultural diplomacy increase understanding between the United States and other countries and cultures, specifically the Arab and Muslim worlds? Following a short review of past successful cultural diplomacy efforts, this study will consider the challenges of cultural diplomacy with the Muslim world today and will suggest potential strategies for the future.

### **HOT JAZZ IN THE COLD WAR**

Cultural diplomacy saw its heyday during the cold war, when the United States armed itself with jazz, abstract expressionism, and modern literature. In the late 1950s more than 100 acts were sent to 89 countries in four years. Musicians such as Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker brought abstract concepts of liberty to life by democratizing their concerts and insisting that ordinary people, not just elites, be allowed to listen. They departed on tours of one to two months, playing in Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Nigeria, and many other Muslim countries, as well as in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

During this time American Cultural Centers thrived in many capitals of the Islamic world, from Alexandria to Aleppo. Professor Samer Shehata of Georgetown University recalls that the American Cultural Center in Alexandria was where he learned about Jefferson and Lincoln.<sup>9</sup> In post-World War II Germany, Marshall Plan funds contributed to building more than 80 centers, sowing the seeds of goodwill throughout the country. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, these centers were shut down. The short-sighted belief that cultural outreach had outlived its purpose, combined with the anti-arts movement in Congress (spearheaded by Senator Jesse Helms) led to the elimination of much of the cultural programming, and ultimately the dissolution of the United States Information Agency (USIA) itself. By so effectively showcasing the attributes of a free society, cultural diplomacy had made itself obsolete, or so many thought. Warnings of the long-term dangers of diminishing cultural diplomacy by Walter Laqueur, among others, went unheeded:

Nor can it seriously be argued—as some have—that these tools of U.S. foreign policy are no longer needed now that the cold war is over and America no longer faces major threats . . . far from being on the verge of a new order, the world has entered a period of great disorder. In facing these new dangers, a re-examination of old priorities is needed. Cultural diplomacy, in the widest sense, has increased in importance, whereas traditional diplomacy and military power . . . are of limited use in coping with most of these dangers.<sup>10</sup>

193

In 1994, shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Laqueur's words may have sounded alarmist; a dozen years later they appear all too prescient.

#### DISSENT AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Cultural diplomacy succeeded during the cold war in part because it allowed and even fostered dissent. Artists, actors, musicians, and writers in any culture act as the national conscience, reflecting, often critically, on society. Andras Simonyi, Hungarian Ambassador to the United States, himself a rock musician, commented:

Rock and roll was the Internet of the sixties and early seventies. It was the carrier of the message of freedom. . . . Rock and roll, culturally speaking, was a decisive element in loosening up communist societies and bringing them closer to a world of freedom.<sup>11</sup>

That the United States permitted critical voices as part of government-sponsored performances and emissaries astonished audiences everywhere, particularly behind the Iron Curtain. When, during a visit to the Soviet Union, U.S. author Norman Cousins was asked whether U.S. writers would be punished for criticizing the government openly,

CYNTHIA P. SCHNEIDER

he surprised his Soviet interlocutor by countering that any government official who complained about writers' criticisms would be more likely to encounter difficulties.<sup>12</sup> Another U.S. writer recalled the impact of the exchanges as follows:

What I sensed they got out of visiting American writers was, to them, our spectacular freedom to speak our minds. I mean, there we were, official representatives of the U.S.—sort of the equivalent of their Writers Union apparatchiks—who had no party line at all . . . and who had the writers' tendency to speak out on controversial issues. . . . In other words, the exchanges enabled Soviet writers, intellectuals, students, et al. to see that that the "free world" wasn't just political cant.<sup>13</sup>

Voices of dissent have been notably absent in more recent attempts to instill ideas of democracy in the Arab and Muslim worlds. Diplomats such as Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy Hughes have discussed democracy all over the world, but audiences in undemocratic societies have had little tangible experience of what

**Voices of dissent have been notably absent in more recent attempts to instill ideas of democracy in the Arab and Muslim worlds.**

freedom of speech means in the United States. Outside the elite circles of the highly educated and well-traveled, students and journalists in Arab and Muslim countries know little about opposition to Bush administration policies or anti-war sentiments and protests in the United States.<sup>14</sup>

194

The current administrative structure for public and cultural diplomacy—as a bureau within the State Department—compromises the independence of cultural diplomacy, which is essential to its credibility. Cultural diplomacy was persuasive during the cold war because its “ambassadors”—performers, writers, thinkers—were perceived to be independent of the government. From the first discussions about public diplomacy by the Creel Committee in 1917–1919, through the creation (1953) and dismantling (1999) of USIA, and even in the reports and commissions of the last five years, the merits of housing public diplomacy activities inside or outside the State Department have been debated.<sup>15</sup> Recently, the *Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy* to the secretary of state recommended an “independent clearinghouse, in the manner of the British Council.”<sup>16</sup>

Other countries realize the importance of an arm's-length relationship between a cultural presence and the government. For example, although both the British Council and the Goethe Institute are funded by the British and German governments respectively, they operate independently. According to an official with the British Council, “We're not prepared to accept the Foreign Office's message for short-term political gain, because that would undermine our credibility.”<sup>17</sup> U.S. diplomats also understand that public diplomacy initiatives are more effective if they are perceived to be separate from any goal of advancing specific policy objectives. A foreign service officer, quoted on

conditions of anonymity, stated, "Public diplomacy is not really about getting things in the press. It's about long-term engagement. It can't be just about supporting the policy—it has to be deeper than that."<sup>18</sup>

The damage to the United States' reputation from the revelations of atrocities and injustices at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay has further crippled public and cultural diplomacy.<sup>19</sup> Serious cracks have emerged in the United States' image as a model for "a positive vision of hope and opportunity," to quote Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy Karen Hughes, who has described her work as a "conversation" with the world. A conversation that begins by acknowledging flaws in our democracy would demonstrate a characteristic that distinguishes democratic countries: self-criticism. By increasing our accessibility, humility can help to build bridges with the rest of the world.

### COMMON VALUES AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Fostering common values has been a key tenet of cultural diplomacy with the Muslim world from the immediate aftermath of 9/11 to the present. In her travels and speeches, Undersecretary Hughes focuses on the common values of "faith, family and social justice and responsibility."<sup>20</sup> While increasing understanding and establishing trust have always been fundamental to cultural diplomacy, campaigns to discover common values between the United States and other countries and cultures can obscure legitimate differences in perspective. For example, the interactions between individuals and their communities are different in the United States and the Arab and Muslim worlds. As Rami Khoury, editor-at-large for Beirut's English newspaper *The Daily Star*, explained:

In fact, people in most countries of the Middle East, in Asia and Africa give up personal freedom in return for the benefits they get from belonging to a group, the family, the tribe, the religious group, the clan, the ethnic group; you know, the Armenians, the Kurds, the Druze, and the Islamic Ummah, the Arab nation, all of these . . . . But this group that you belong to gives you meaning, gives you protection, gives you a sense of hope for the future. It gives you all of those things that you in this country get from your status as individual citizens in a country run according to the rule of law in which there is a mechanism, reasonably fair, for a redress of grievance and adjudication of your disputes through the law. We don't have that system in most of the third world and the Arab world, so you don't get these things from a sense of security or a sense of identity or sense of well-being for the future. You don't get them from your status as a citizen in a state of law or land. You get them from your family, your tribe, your religious group, whatever.<sup>21</sup>

By contrast, the classic U.S. hero, in art and in life, from Huckleberry Finn to Rosa Parks, is the individual who fights the system. This difference in roles given to families and individuals has precipitated some of the misunderstandings between cultures.<sup>22</sup> If

cultural diplomacy helped illuminate such difference between our cultures, then perhaps it could begin to help us understand one another as well.

### POLITICS DEMONIZES, ART HUMANIZES

Given the resurgence of conflict between Israel, Lebanon, and Hezbollah, the Iraq war, the prison scandals, the stagnation of the Middle East peace process, and the election of Hamas, this is a particularly difficult moment for relations between the United States and the Arab and Muslim worlds. During moments of tension and conflict such as these, cultural diplomacy can emerge as an effective—and sometimes the only viable—means of communication. Creative expression crosses cultures, helping people from diverse backgrounds to find common ground. The Nigerian Pulitzer Prize–winning novelist Wole Soyinka aptly observed that “art humanizes while politics demonizes.”<sup>23</sup> To maximize the impact of cultural diplomacy, the following should be understood:

- Cultural diplomacy is a two-way street.
- Cultural diplomacy operates in the long term.
- Cultural diplomacy does not explain or compensate for unpopular policies.
- Cultural diplomacy can increase understanding between different peoples and cultures.
- Cultural diplomacy can divert or entertain while communicating aspects of U.S. culture, such as diversity, opportunity, individual expression, freedom of speech, and meritocracy.
- Cultural diplomacy can open doors between U.S. diplomats and their host countries, even when relations are strained.
- Cultural diplomacy cannot be effectively measured; it makes a qualitative, not quantitative, difference in relations between nations and peoples.
- Cultural diplomacy works best when it caters to the interests of a host country or region.
- In today’s climate of tight budgets, cultural diplomacy needs to be creative, flexible, and opportunistic.

196

Effective cultural diplomacy initiatives can be wholly original, or they can build on extant programs, exhibitions, or performances; they can be sponsored by the government or by the private sector. Most important, though, is that they resonate with the local population. Sometimes a positive impact is predictable, other times not. For example, the success of a visiting break dancing group to Damascus in the 1980s exceeded all expectations. The Syrian audience became so carried away that even the security guards joined in, pantomiming living in a glass cage as they danced.<sup>24</sup>

The potential for cultural diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim worlds far surpasses the record to date. Considering what has worked well and what might work in the future, I will now look at the possibilities for cultural diplomacy in three key areas—film,

music, and literature.

## FILM

Already well-established in Iran, Egypt, and India, film is growing in other Arab and Muslim countries including the U.A.E., Oman, and even Yemen. For a country like Iran, film provides one of the few openings for Americans. Now entering its 25<sup>th</sup> year, the *Fajr* film festival includes U.S. films (even if none won awards in 2005) and Americans among its judges. Dubai, Cairo, and Oman all hold film festivals, and Arab and Muslim film festivals take place throughout Europe and the United States. Only a concomitant increase in production and screening of contemporary films from the Arab and Muslim worlds is lacking.

Against all odds, the first Yemeni feature film, *A New Day in Old Sana'a*, was released in 2005. Director Bader Ben Hirsi and producer Ahmed Abdali wanted to “counter the sensationalist coverage of the Arab world” and to enable viewers to “go behind the walls and [find] out a bit more about the women, the men, the culture, customs, and traditions” of Yemen.<sup>25</sup> Making the film entailed shipping nine tons of equipment from Beirut; finding and training Yemeni actors; fending off angry on-lookers, a hostile press, and the Ministry of Culture; and a public defense before the Parliament.<sup>26</sup> *A New Day in Old Sana'a* has been shown to acclaim in many venues from Cairo (where it won the Arab Film Award at the Cairo Film Festival) to Toronto and New York, but it only has been screened a few times in Sana'a itself. Even so, the Yemeni Parliament has said it would “fund” another film (out of a \$1.4 million budget, the Yemeni government contributed \$40,000).

The example of *A New Day in Old Sana'a* is illustrative of the difficulties in making films in most of the Arab and Muslim world. Despite the burgeoning popularity of film and film festivals there, more than 90 percent of the films shown are U.S. films. Furthermore, Arab-made films tend to be parochial, and apart from festivals, are rarely screened outside their country of origin.<sup>27</sup> Oil-rich Gulf states such as the U.A.E. and Oman host lavish film festivals and celebrate film icons such as Egyptian director Youssef Chahine or actor Adel Iman, but funding for young filmmakers is virtually non-existent.

Traditionally, European (rather than U.S.) sources have provided funding for films from the Arab world, but with a distinct predilection for political films that focus on the conflicts in the region.<sup>28</sup> If the potential of film to break down stereotypes is ever to be realized, then more films about everyday Arab and Muslim lives will have to be

**If the potential of film to break down stereotypes is ever to be realized, then more films about everyday Arab and Muslim lives will have to be made.**

made. Equally important, in order to broaden views about the Islamic world in the West, Arab and Muslim actors need to be seen with greater regularity in films and TV shows about everyday life.

The lack of funding in the Arab and Muslim worlds combined with the wealth of experience in filmmaking in the United States opens up a tremendous opportunity for cultural diplomacy. At present, the U.S. government supports film in the Arab and Muslim worlds by sending film experts and U.S. films to festivals in the Middle East and Asia. Supporting young Arab filmmakers could contribute to the opening up of Arab and Muslim societies, given the general tendency of filmmakers to look critically at their worlds.

Although Hollywood can inspire admiration, envy, or disgust, it still is the gold standard for filmmaking. Hany Abu-Assad, whose film *Paradise Now* captured a Golden Globe and was nominated for an Oscar, is in a class by himself as the only Arab or Muslim filmmaker to have succeeded in Hollywood. His example is instructive. Recognized as a talent with good ideas, he received mentoring and advice at screenwriting workshops in France and at the Sundance Institute.<sup>29</sup> For a film to succeed internationally, as *Paradise Now* has done, Abu-Assad and Michael Nozik, producer of *Syriana*, believe that the film has to speak an international language. In other words, it must adopt a more streamlined, dramatic narrative style than is characteristic of many Arab films. According to Abu-Assad and Nozik, the United States (and the West in general) has much to offer in terms of mentoring and developing talent in filmmaking. The Doris Duke Foundation has partnered with the Sundance Institute to support the participation of more Arab and Muslim filmmakers; hopefully, other groups will take similar initiatives.

The United States has everything to gain by becoming more generous with its financial and human resources in filmmaking. Film has the power to tear down as well as build up; the United States was targeted in a recent Turkish film about the fighting in Iraq, which went on to become the most popular film in the country. The wife of the prime minister even attended the opening of this high profile anti-U.S. production. Given the power of film to spread negative images of the United States, it is in the United States' interest to support filmmakers in creating images that bridge, rather than widen, cultural gaps.<sup>30</sup>

## Music

The worldwide dominance of hip-hop as well as the popularity of Muslim musicians such as Sami Yusef among non-Muslim audiences proves that music is a universal language. Though it originated in the United States, hip-hop music is now pervasive

enough in the Arab and Muslim worlds to warrant a Wikipedia entry on “Arab Hip-Hop.” Like jazz, it has resonated throughout the world with singers and groups from Amsterdam to Almaty integrating the basic beat of American hip-hop with their own traditions and languages. A genre conceived as outsiders’ protest against the system, hip-hop resonates with those marginalized from the mainstream. From the suburbs of Paris to Kyrgyzstan in central Asia, hip-hop music reflects the struggle against authority.<sup>31</sup> When terrorism expert Jessica Stern asked Muslim youths in Amsterdam about Americans they admired, rapper Tupac Shakur was mentioned.<sup>32</sup> In the words of hip-hop artist Ali Shaheed Muhammad, “People identify with the struggle. It doesn’t really matter where you come from, we all have the same story. The music has an aggression to it, and it taps into the emotion or the spirit or the soul. Lots of times, people may not understand what you are saying, but they also feel the pain.”<sup>33</sup>

**Hip-hop music offers a potential link to Muslim and Arab youth; we should be more creative in tapping it.**

Although talented hip-hop artists perform all over the globe, the United States still has the most respected figures. As with film, why not be more generous with our hip-hop talent? This does not have to mean U.S. domination of the hip-hop scene. Why not have global hip-hop jam sessions, with artists from different countries playing together? Instead of funding another report researching how to reach marginalized, hostile groups in the Arab and Muslim worlds, why not reach out to them with something we share—hip-hop music? If just one or two of the American hip-hop stars were to become interested in such an initiative, the impact would be tremendous. Even more significant would be if an American Muslim artist, such as Mos Def or Nas, participated in the jam session or concert. Hip-hop music offers a potential link to Muslim and Arab youth; we should be more creative in tapping it.

199

#### LITERATURE

When Amy Tan delivered a lecture in February of 2006 at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in Doha, Qatar, she was introduced by two students—one a Qatari, one a Palestinian—both of whom spoke of how profoundly Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club* had influenced their adolescent struggles with issues of identity and culture. Initially astonished by the reaction, Ms. Tan said, “I had no idea that people would read this book about a very quirky family of Chinese-Americans and that anyone would identify with it. Imagine my surprise when people came up to me who were Jewish and Turkish and German saying that the book was exactly like relations in their families.”<sup>34</sup> The two young Arab women found their own questions and doubts mirrored in the struggles of Tan’s characters with issues of tradition, identification, patriotism, and loss.

It did not matter that the characters were Chinese-American; the stories appealed on an emotional level.

That is the key to the power of art, and to the potential power of cultural diplomacy—the appeal to emotions. In explaining her decision to write a novel as a way to respond to the tragedy of Myanmar, Ms. Tan observed that without deliberately delivering a message, it is possible “through the serendipity of art to create something that resonates with people.”<sup>35</sup> Millions will learn about the repressive regime in Myanmar as they enjoy *Saving Fish from Drowning*; a negligible fraction of Amy Tan’s readership would be likely to read a policy paper on Myanmar.

Literature can offer a textured, moving, thought-provoking, and entertaining introduction to the United States, and yet the number of books translated into Arabic every year is negligible. Cairo, the second largest U.S. Embassy in the world, received just \$37,500 in 2006 for translation projects; Embassy Amman received less than half that amount.<sup>36</sup> While such funding is often supplemented by private efforts, it is in the U.S. government’s direct, strategic interest to support both English–Arabic and Arabic–English translations to bridge the gap in understanding between cultures.

Translated literature also should be reassessed in light of the widespread use of the Internet in many parts of the Arab and Muslim world. Translating literature on the Internet could be both cost-effective and efficient. In Egypt, where Internet access is free, many more young people are likely to read books, articles, and poems on the Internet than in their original form. Of course, this is an imperfect solution since many in rural and impoverished settings cannot log on, but, in any case, translations on the Internet would allow a much larger part of the Arab population to be exposed to Western literature. Objections over intellectual property rights might be raised, but hopefully they could be solved through government tax incentives, funding, or the goodwill of the private sector. Using the Internet as the purveyor of literature and ideas might also facilitate contact with publics in the Middle East, which has one of the highest proportions of computer users in the world—1 computer per 18 persons, compared with the worldwide average of 1 per 78.<sup>37</sup> In order to maximize the potential benefit of translating literature into Arabic, the U.S. strategy needs to be nimble, opportunistic, and willing to use technology to reach more people.<sup>38</sup>

#### SOFT POWER, HARD DOLLARS

The examples of outreach strategies for film, music, and literature give an idea of what might be possible for the United States to achieve by developing creative and coordinated strategies to communicate through culture.<sup>39</sup> The irony is that the country whose number one export is cultural products and whose popular culture permeates

the world is struggling to define itself. Henry J. Hyde, when he was Chairman of the House Committee on International Relations in the House of Representatives, noted, "How is it that the country that invented Hollywood and Madison Avenue has allowed such a destructive and parodied image of itself to become the intellectual coin of the realm overseas?"<sup>40</sup> One factor is the division between the private and public sectors in the United States, something that is an anomaly in the Middle East. The dilemma is that the United States' largely profit-driven popular culture is understood by much of the world to "represent" the United States. Societies in which the lines between the public and the private sector are blurred have difficulty reconciling their cultural climates with the idea that the images of sex and violence in American film and music are fictitious, emanate purely from the private sector, and do not reflect a government communication strategy.

Soft power requires hard dollars. To even begin to make a dent in the negative opinion worldwide about the United States would require an enormous increase in the paltry sums currently allocated for public diplomacy. Although the public diplomacy budget—used for both cultural programming and exchange programs—has escalated steadily over the last four years, the funds for 2006—just over \$700 million—amount to a fraction of 1 percent of the military affairs budget. The puny size of the public diplomacy budget and consistently poor results from public opinion polls tell a tragic story about U.S. efforts at cultural diplomacy. For all the reports on and declarations of the importance of public diplomacy, the U.S. government has only paid lip service to public and cultural diplomacy.

## CONCLUSION

The preliminary results of a landmark Gallup poll of Muslim and Arab populations, projected to reach one billion people, indicate the prevalent feeling of humiliation that stems from a perceived lack of understanding and lack of respect from the West.<sup>41</sup> Building understanding, respect, and trust to alleviate this feeling of humiliation will require time, as well as cultural diplomacy. In the words of the Egyptian official interviewed by the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy:

Developing respect for others and their ways of thinking—this is what cultural diplomacy does . . . . We want people to know about real Americans. Let your people know that Egyptians are not just fanatics—Islam is one religion, but there are many ways of applying it . . . . Americans should build bridges, they shouldn't be afraid, they need to open up again.<sup>42</sup> 

## NOTES

1. For a summary and analysis of the data collected by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes project, see Andrew Kohut and Bruce Stokes, *American Against the World* (New York: Times Books, 2006). For the most recent polling report, see Pew Research Center, "America's Image Slips, But Allies Share U.S. Concerns Over Iran, Hamas," Pew Global Attitudes Project, <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=252e> (accessed 12 July 2006). For earlier reports, see Pew Research Center, "America's Image Further Erodes, Europeans Want Weaker Ties," 18 March 2003, <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=175> (accessed 12 July 2006); Pew Research Center, "Views of a Changing World 2003," 3 June 2003, <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=185> (accessed, 12 July 2006). Gallup has released preliminary results of a poll of one billion Muslims to be completed by the end of 2006. See Meredith Buel, "New Poll of Islamic World Says Most Muslims Reject Terrorism," *Voice of America*, 2 May 2006, <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2006-05-02.voa82.cfm?CFID=7176751&CFTOKEN=55381572> (accessed 14 June 2006).

2. This definition of cultural diplomacy is from Milton C. Cummings, "Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey," Center for Arts and Culture, <http://www.culturalpolicy.org/pdf/MCCpaper.pdf> (accessed 14 August 2006); cited also in Cynthia P. Schneider, "Diplomacy that Works: 'Best Practices' in Cultural Diplomacy," Center for Arts and Culture, <http://www.culturalpolicy.org/pdf/Schneider.pdf> (accessed 15 July 2006).

3. For a summary of the reports and their recommendations, see Susan B. Epstein and Lisa Mages, "Public Diplomacy: a Review of Past Recommendations," CRS Report for Congress, 2005.

4. Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, "Cultural Diplomacy: the Linchpin of Public Diplomacy," U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/54374.pdf> (accessed 15 July 2006).

5. Kohut and Stokes, *American Against the World*, 27–29.

6. *Ibid.*, 29–30.

7. Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, "Cultural Diplomacy," 12.

8. *Ibid.*

9. "Communicating with the World: Diplomacy that Works" (conference, Georgetown University, Washington DC, 30 April 2003).

10. Walter Laqueur, "Save Public Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 5 (1994): 20.

11. Bill Nichols, "How Rock n' Roll Freed the World," *USA Today*, 6 November 2003.

12. Cynthia P. Schneider, "Culture Communicates: U.S. Diplomacy that Works," in *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, ed. Jan Melissen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 152. See also Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 158. On Soviet reactions to encounters with American freedoms, see Frederick C. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive: the Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960).

13. Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War*, 154; quoting Ted Solotaroff.

14. Liza Chambers, conversation, 14 June, 2006. Information about students comes from Soliya, "The Connect Program," <http://www.soliya.net/> (accessed 15 July 2006). *Soliya* is an organization that brings U.S. and Muslim world students together for virtual discussions, and exemplifies how the Internet can be put to creative use to bridge gaps and increase understanding.

15. On the history of cultural diplomacy in the United States, see Richard T. Arndt *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2005), 27–74, 264–337. On the "independence"—or not—of cultural affairs, see also Charles Frankel, *The Neglected Aspect of Foreign Affairs* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1965); Hans Tuch, ed. *Communicating with the World in the 1990s* (Washington DC: USIA Alumni Association and The Public Diplomacy Foundation, 1994).

16. Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, "Cultural Diplomacy," 14–15.

17. *Ibid.*, 15.

18. Nicholas Kravet, "Cultural Diplomacy Pays Off, Envoys Say," *Washington Times*, 22 March 2004.

19. Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, "Cultural Diplomacy," 22.

20. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, "U.S. Undersecretary of State Pushes for More Interfaith Dialog," 11 June 2006, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/pint/soo6/o6/b37ec268-416a-4591-abb3-f559920b341> (accessed 12 June 2006).

21. Rami Khoury, "Unprecedented Opportunity," interview by the Center for Public Integrity, 2 March, 2005, <http://www.publicintegrity.org/report.aspx?aid=665#> (accessed 16 June 2006).

22. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *The Caged Virgin: An Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam* (New York: Free Press, 2006) contrasts the importance of the individual in the west with values and practices in Muslim societies. Laila Lalami, "The Missionary Position," *The Nation*, 19 June 2006 argues that differences are not so stark.

23. White House Conference on Cultural Diplomacy, November 2000.

24. The description of the break dance group in Syria relies on Schneider, "Diplomacy that Works." The information originally came from a conversation with Marjorie Ransom in February 2003. See also William A. Rugh, *American Encounters with Arabs: The "Soft Power" of U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Middle East* (Westport, CN: Praeger Security International, 2006), 100.

25. Bader Ben Hirsi (Arts and Cultural Leaders Seminar, U.S.–Islamic World Forum, Doha, Qatar, 19 February 2006).

26. Bader Ben Hirsi, conversation, February 2006. The cast bonded so completely through these tribulations that no fewer than five marriages were celebrated among actors and members of the crew.

27. Arts and Cultural Leaders Seminar, US–Islamic World Forum, Doha, Qatar, 19 February 2006.

28. Conversations with filmmakers Omar Naim, Hany Abu-Assad, Bader Ben Hirsi, and Ahmed Abdali.

29. Conversations with Hany Abu Assad and Michael Nozik (producer of *Syriana*), February and March 2006.

30. A participant in the Arts and Cultural Leaders Seminar revealed that when she spent several days with Chechen rebels in 1997, she discovered that the rebel leader Basayev modeled himself after an unlikely combination of William Wallace and Rambo.

31. David Brooks, editorial, "Gangsta, in French," *New York Times*, 10 November 2005.

32. Conversation with Jessica Stern, March 2005.

33. Press release for the 2006 Arts and Cultural Leaders Seminar, U.S.–Islamic World Forum, Doha, Qatar, 20 February 2006 [www.us-islamicworldforum.org](http://www.us-islamicworldforum.org). A four time Grammy winner, Ali Shaheed Muhammad is the founder of the group A Tribe Called Quest. See also Brooks, "Gangsta."

34. Arts and Cultural Leaders Seminar, U.S.–Islamic World Forum.

35. Ibid.; Amy Tan, *Saving Fish from Drowning* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2005).

36. T.J. Dowling, Bureau of International Information Programs, Department of State, 16 June 2006.

37. Government Accountability Office, "State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Significant Challenges," United States Information Agency Alumni Association, [www.publicdiplomacy.org/63.htm](http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/63.htm) (accessed 15 July 2005).

38. Soliya, "The Connect Program."

39. Government Accountability Office, "State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences" notes the lack of an overall strategy for public diplomacy.

40. Henry J. Hyde, "Speaking to our Silent Allies: Public Diplomacy and U.S. Foreign Policy," Department of State, December 2002, <http://usinfor.state.gov/journals/itps/1201/ijpe/pj7-4hyde.htm> (accessed 16 June 2006).

41. Meredith Buel, "New Poll of Islamic World Says Most Muslims Reject Terrorism," Voice of America News, 2 May 2006, <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2006-05/2006-05-02-voa82.cfm?CFID=22008434&CFTOKEN=48206128> (accessed 15 June 2006); John Esposito, conversation, Georgetown University, February 2006.

42. Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, "Cultural Diplomacy," 14.

Copyright of Brown Journal of World Affairs is the property of Brown University and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.