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I would argue that while some of the defining features of American PD were well on their way to being established before USIA was created, they were all solidified during those years. If we take public diplomacy as purposeful communication with foreign publics in an effort to shape perceptions of the United States and advance its policy objectives, it seems to me the American form of that effort owes much to the characteristics and politics of our own culture. The impulses, tensions and the constraints embedded in our political culture really don't change even when the policy challenges and objectives in a changing global landscape do.

1. American political liberalism at its core is about freedom and autonomy. We believe individuals and the societies they comprise matter and can make a difference in our own and other's well being. Because of the revolutionary birth of our own society, we are especially alert to social upheaval and revolutionary possibility in times of global power shifts. As a consequence, we reach out broadly to various sectors within societies believing that individuals can *and should* matter.
 - In USIA in the post WWII and post colonial years as new countries were coming into being this was reflected in the extensive footprint of USIS posts well outside the State Department architecture. We wanted to be present and engaged well beyond capital and major cities. We were out there with the Peace Corps. We had student affairs officers engaged with those more likely to be politically active even when they were third world students in European capitals.
 - We created open institutions like binational centers, cultural centers and libraries to maximize the opportunities for self-selecting young people to learn about the United States: language, culture, history purposes etc. We supported educational advising centers and partnered with exchange organizations to facilitate access to the United States for study.
 - We directed broadcasts to mass publics, managed mobile movie and exhibit units, sought media placement and influence to reach beyond the limited personal relationships we could form with the influence multipliers within the existing leadership of national societies.
 - As budgets were cut and global politics appeared to have stabilized, we drew back from the broad societal outreach and openness and rebalanced to a tighter relationship and influence strategy.

How this outreach to mass or openness to self-selecting audience is done may differ now because of security, technology, staffing and budget but the mass - elite or “which public“ debate is still with us in this time of rampant urbanization, demographic shifts, and political upheaval. The need to build legitimacy by maintaining transparency and accessibility does not go away. The need for strategic reasoning and political argument at home about why, in a time of shrinking resources, we do or do not cast our PD net beyond social networks and individual relationships increases.

2. By being immersed in societies abroad, USIS had the relationships and skills to develop knowledge and expertise about the local political sphere that gave us some leverage in advising Embassy colleagues on the perceptions, wants and needs of the public. We were better able to be weathermen knowing which way the societal wind was blowing.
 - The grounding abroad also gave field operations the magnetism to pull needed products and services from headquarters rather than solely be conduits for products and programs generated in Washington and pushed to the field.
 - The personal knowledge of foreign attitudes gained by field officers professionally dedicated to figuring them out was supplemented in Washington by research, polling, media analysis and other social scientific methods to determine audience preferences, concerns and sentiments on issues of importance to us. This institutional backstop in Washington gave field officers more leverage to raise considerations of public opinion with embassy colleagues and with the policy community in Washington.
 - With a smaller and more bunkered PD presence abroad and an increased flow of foreign news into the United States power shifts to headquarters. The pull from the posts' magnetic field based on acknowledged expertise in local news play and audience attitudes and concerns weakens and the push fueled by the illusion of real time knowledge of news and attitudes abroad by those in Washington strengthens.
 - The absence of an institutional PD axis in State reduces the leverage PD officers have both with their embassy colleagues and within Washington to factor foreign public attitudes and sentiment into policy formulation and implementation.

The currents flowing between headquarters and field posts are always in flux. The field's effort to have foreign voices heard by those who design foreign policies to be implemented abroad has always been difficult. But, it is strengthened when organizational paths exist to leverage consideration of foreign perceptions as policy deliberations occur in Washington. Absent those

paths, American domestic politics will eclipse considerations of international politics every time.

3. In order to represent America to the world, you have to define “America” and the choices made are always politically wrought.
 - Each of us can tell stories about books removed from libraries, speakers blacklisted, paintings challenged in art exhibits, news stories spiked or -- the reverse: content selected and promoted -- because of partisan political views. The more strident the partisan politics in the United States, the rougher the road for public diplomacy responsible for representing and communicating the whole.
 - Yet, we know those stories because they were always an exception to our established practice of honoring academic integrity, adhering to journalistic codes of tell the truth as we knew it and avoid outright lies, attributing our work openly, and being open and inclusive in our representations of the plurality of the United States. Had we thought violations of our established norms and ethics were OK we would not have worn “mindless gnome” buttons in protest when our ethics were breached. Our concern was always maintaining credibility.
 - The need for legitimacy and credibility in the public dimension of American foreign policy has never been more important and more difficult to achieve given the proliferation of official agencies and actors engaged in American foreign relations and the divisiveness of our politics.

American diversity has not lessened nor has political partisanship become less strident than USIA experienced. The real time nature of information flows and the fragmentation of epistemic communities by political preference within the United States makes the challenge of choosing which “American identity” to represent abroad much more political. The increase in foreign reporters covering the United States relative to the retreat of American media channels abroad reduces significantly American ability to define of its own brand, set the agenda and frame the issues that arise in the global public sphere.

4. Private citizens, enterprises, media and academic institutions will always play the predominant role in shaping perceptions of the United States. Government priorities and programs are therefore set in the context of robust private sector activities which we philosophically favor as a liberal nation.
 - We worked to achieve permeable borders allowing people, media and ideas to flow freely.

- What we said and did was always seen juxtaposed against that much larger American flow of images, ideals and ideas around the world which we supported and over which we had no control. We were never the gatekeepers of American culture and communication abroad. We were handmaidens.
- Cultural and educational exchange programs were developed and implemented in partnership with intercultural exchange organizations rooted in the United States with varying degrees of independence from government. An international architecture of bi-national Fulbright Commissions was created and institutionalized.
- We translated and distributed books, only rarely publishing when the market held no sway. Similarly, we distributed commercially produced information where it was not viable in a market sense in a given country. We produced language specific magazines when American commercial alternatives were not available. Our radio broadcasts, were focused on denied or underserved areas in languages making them accessible.
- We worked for strategic purposes with impresarios to divert commercially traveling presentations and exhibits to places where the market would not carry them.
- We collaborated, piggy-backed and incentivized private sector activities we deemed in our interest in places where they did not grow organically.
- Now, with the growth of dynamic American non-official actors - in all their variety -- operating abroad in the public sphere, official public diplomats struggle to have knowledge of their activities and cultivate relationships with them. Beyond the apolitical intercultural, humanitarian and economic development institutions, there are increasing numbers of American transnational political advocacy groups, competitive with states, and intent on influencing their political agendas and policy with which our public diplomats must contend.
- If we accept that we are now all increasingly involved in the same global events and share their consequences, we know that our citizens will increasingly seek direct participation in international relations to shape the world in accord with their values. In this constantly fluctuating mixed-actor environment official Americans must choose what kind of coalition they need to achieve their various policy objectives which may be at odds with some American citizens acting transnationally in the public sphere.

The global flow of American citizens, enterprises and culture is even more intense and inchoate than ever thanks in part to the work we did to open borders. The flow carries American domestic political contestation globally. Additionally, there is increased global flow from other countries creating a dense competition of ideas. Agenda setting, getting attention and achieving influence in this swirling interplay of forces requires strategic thinking about arguments and alliances and political action that transcends borders.

5. American public diplomacy has always been shaped by the politics arising from dueling philosophical motivations to act in the world that is deeply embedded in our culture. People are attracted to public diplomacy work for a range of nationalist or internationalist motives.
- During the USIA years some were inspired by and argued for the ideal of cultural relations that would rise above national culture and aim for the creation of a more peaceful, cosmopolitan world by intellectually and aesthetically overcoming national cultural differences in formation of a post-national global civil society.
 - Others worked more pragmatically toward an appreciation of American culture and mutual understanding, appreciation, perhaps tolerance, of national cultural differences abroad that will always be there in an effort to manage cultural plurality and attract participation in a global order led by the United States.
 - Still others saw cultural relations more broadly to include economic opportunity for the world's disadvantaged aiming to improve the life chances of the marginalized in societies abroad in order to make democracy more possible and freedom and autonomy for individuals achievable internationally.

Finding the balance between cosmopolitan concerns and our own communitarian values and interests continues today in a much more complex global environment where American pre-eminence is under challenge and its ability to shape the milieu within which international relations and politics takes place is diminished. In making our choices about what is achievable in the public dimension of our foreign policy we need more than ever to attend to Daniel Boorstin's warning of 50 year's ago not to be seduced by the self-deceiving magic of prestige.

Thank-you.