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THE EVOLUTION OF MEDIA AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the evolution of power dynamics in achieving U.S. foreign policies, paying special attention to the resurgence of soft power and public diplomacy in the years following September 11th, 2001. The thesis argues that the use of various forms of media have been critical elements in successful U.S. soft power and public diplomacy efforts, in large part because of media's ability to frame conflicts, influence perceptions and empower citizens to voice their opinions. In making this point, three forms of media, including radio, television and the newer Internet-based social media, are analyzed as potential contributors to U.S. soft power and public diplomacy, both historically and in the present. First, the role of radio, particularly Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Radio Liberty (RL), during the Cold War is discussed as a traditional use of soft power. Utilizing these radio vehicles resulted in building relationships and strengthening U.S. credibility. Following the discussion on radio, television's role in the Kosovo conflict is analyzed. It is determined that the Corporate News Network (CNN) was used as a soft power tool through framing the conflict, which, in turn, generated international support for U.S. intervention policies. After providing examples of how these media vehicles were used to reinforce certain international relations outcomes and the implementation of foreign policies, the thesis goes on to discuss social media's potential to be used as a grassroots soft power tool. The thesis questions and discusses potential U.S. involvement in the Arab Spring, and the degree to which the U.S. government may have accelerated the use of social media in order to generate youth spokespersons as a grassroots democracy promotion strategy. Several key factors which were influential in the success of media during all three events were also analyzed in an effort to highlight characteristics of soft power and public diplomacy that can be an asset if used correctly and a detriment if not.

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INTRODUCTION

With the turning of the millennium and the technological advancements it ushered in, international relations is encountering a new set of obstacles and opportunities that place it at a virtual crossroads. The global political and economic environment, now more interrelated than ever before, offers a number of threats related to anti-Americanism, terrorism, and extreme cultural differences. These threats, however, are balanced equally by opportunities to convey interest in and understanding of cultures and peoples' desire for human rights. While in recent decades the U.S. has applied a heavy-handed military approach in dealing with global threats, such as in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the current administration is now trying to take advantage of international relations opportunities presented in this newly globalized world. In an effort to keep up with the digital evolution and take advantage of technology's ability to restructure the global environment, the administration is reviving tactics from the Cold War and modernizing them with current times. These public diplomacy and soft power tactics, which were successfully implemented with radio and television in the past, are now being coupled with modern media resources in an effort to reinvigorate international relations strategies. By tapping into social media's reach and ability to inform and influence, a foreign affairs platform has re-emerged and an unparalleled form of persuasion has been unleashed. The U.S. administration is doing what it can to harness this power and apply it to foreign policy efforts designed to expand the U.S. sphere of influence and promote democracy.

Interestingly enough, there are several aspects of this global environment that both demand and support the success of the U.S. in this quest. One trend which works in its favor is the rapid expansion of Internet usage, social media sites and mobile devices. The rise of these technologies has facilitated a level of global communication that has not been seen before, and

ultimately creates an opportunity for dialogue and value-sharing between the U.S. and foreign populations.

Another factor that supports the expansion of the U.S. influence is the increase in international democratization. As the ideals and values of other undemocratic nations align with those of the U.S. and other democratic nations, the ease of communication between nations increases, therefore facilitating the ability of the U.S. to speak and relate to foreign publics. Taking this one step further, although communication with countries having repressive regimes may be difficult, the rise of both democratization and Internet capabilities has opened a channel in which communication, ideology promotion and mobilization of grassroots efforts can take place. In situations such as this, grassroots efforts typically support democratic ideals like freedom of speech, freedom to gather and protest, freedom to vote, and the ability to participate in government policies and actions. This combination of mobilizing factors provides an opportunity for the U.S. to strategically communicate and sympathize with the wants and needs of repressed populations, in hopes of gaining their support and turning them into advocates for U.S. foreign policies, especially during times of conflict. These trends, particularly the rise of the Internet and its social media capabilities, have rapidly catapulted the entire world, including governments, organizations and individuals alike, into unprecedented ways of using media to connect, inform, mobilize and influence on a real time basis. Given the potential power that can stem from this particular media influence, U.S. soft power and public diplomacy strategies have intensified and the nature of international relations and foreign policy implementation is being transformed.

Social media has become, and will continue to be, an integral part of U.S. public diplomacy efforts. It provides a platform not only for U.S. soft power initiatives but also for the

expansion of grassroots social activism and mobilization activities as was seen in the Middle East in 2011. Because of this, many wonder about the extent of U.S. involvement in the Middle Eastern Arab Spring, also known as the Facebook and Twitter revolution. Interestingly enough, research indicates that the U.S. government did, in fact, utilize indirect methods of support for the activists and strategically applied soft power tactics in mobilizing support around its democracy promotion agenda.

Taking the lessons learned from past uses of radio and television during the Cold War and the post-Cold War Kosovo conflict, the U.S. is now better trained in how to apply Internet and social media technology in today's soft power and public diplomacy strategies. Key points learned include the importance of credibility, cultural sensitivity and patience. Since the U.S. is now focusing much of its attention on the Middle East as an international hot-spot of national security and economic interest, and because this region holds a significant amount of hostility towards the U.S., these lessons learned will be vital in the continued use of Internet and social media as soft power and public diplomacy tools within this region.

1. The CNN Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations

The CNN Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations, written by Eytan Bilboa, argues that CNN is a force of influence, domestically and internationally. Bilboa starts the article by acknowledging that WWII created the first "truly global international system" (27). For the first time in U.S. history, the events of one region had an effect and were of interest to other nations, even those at great distances. CNN has become a critical tool in influencing how these international events are perceived, and therefore the degree of influence surrounding them. The coverage of the Gulf War marks the turning point in strategic international communications, as the "real-time coverage served to create a powerful new imperative for prompt action" (28). In speaking on this, Colin Powell observed that "live television coverage doesn't change the policy, but it does create the environment in which the policy is made" (28).

2. Democracy Promotion in the Age of Social Media: Risks and Opportunities

In *Democracy Promotion in the Age of Social Media: Risks and Opportunities,* Dr. Anita Breuer analyzes how social media is becoming a critical element in democracy promotion and furthering America's political agenda. Throughout her article, she documents the growth of this phenomenon over the past two decades and touches upon certain elements of social media which make it ideal for promoting democracy.

In analyzing the environments in which the majority of democracy promotion takes place, Dr. Anita Breuer indicates that the public is not entirely open-minded to the idea of U.S. mediation. As a result, the best chance of influencing the public to consider democratic implementation is through use of organizations that are indirectly connected to the U.S. government, if at all. Some examples she lists consist of political foundations, churches, and NGOs. She asserts that these organizations are the best

approach to communicating with the public because they have many ties, are more trusted within the community than government sponsors, and therefore have the ability to relay information through existing networking structures (1)

However, before the U.S. administration realized the potential for the Internet, the government originally attempted to use it for attaining developmental goals in under-developed or developing nations. For example, in the early 1990's, government agencies concentrated entirely on utilizing the Internet to "increase penetration rates and improve access for marginalized communities" (2). With advances in technology, the goal of reaching these audiences was surpassed and then some. Due to the advent of Web 2.0, the Internet now allowed users the ability to collaborate and interact with one another, eliminating any notion that users were passive. This was especially proven in the 2011 Arab Spring where Internet consumers created a new purpose for social media. It became a platform to stimulate discontent and form a revolution against their oppressive regimes.

It is now recognized that social digital media (SDM), as Dr. Brueur calls it, "allows citizens to discuss public affairs, to join forces in monitoring the behavior of officials and to mobilize protests against their governments at relatively low transaction costs"(2). The success of the mobilization can, in part, be because there were numerous forms of social media that played a role.

The most common form of social media is known as social networks. Of the social networks, Facebook is most popular and supportive to the cause for two reasons. One reason is because it is a platform that is rated very high in media richness, meaning that it has the capacity to transmit a large amount of information at any given time. It also scored very highly in self-disclosure, which means that people willingly provide personal information to make their profile a better representation of their personality, or at least how they want to portray themselves. Aside from these characteristics of Facebook and other networks alike, there are many other elements that make these platforms user-friendly. For one, "they enable users to learn about their virtual friends inclinations, to share media content and to participate in discussion forums, thus allowing them to simulate real-life interaction" (2). Because of the large amount of personal information that is collected by such sites, there is a simulated sense of

interpersonal trust. This played a very large role in the Middle Eastern uprisings as the interpersonal relationships built online dictated the intensity of the revolt and the amount of risk people were willing to take (especially knowing that hundreds of other Facebook friends would be revolting with you).

Blogs are another form of social media. They consist of websites run by an individual who posts little excerpts about news or personal insights in order to receive comments and start a conversation. The most influential form of a blog is Twitter, which is micro-blog that allows individuals to share short, 140 word posts with their followers. Unlike Facebook, this form of social media does not have a high level of media richness because it is mainly text-based. Only recently has Twitter allows people to upload photos. However, the platform scored very high in self-disclosure. The real benefit of using Twitter and regular blogs in circumstances like the Arab Spring is that they allow people to spread censored information, which is a great threat to authoritarian regimes that typically put great effort into repressing information. For example, "in Egypt, reports published by bloggers on human rights abuses by police were central to generating the public climate that facilitated the mass protests at Tahrir Square. The potential that blogs have for generating interpersonal trust hence suggests that they can be used as viable tools in the promotion of democracy" (3).

Dr. Brueur also takes into consideration content communities, which have not received much credit in the news for having a large role in the uprising. She, however, proves otherwise. One of the reasons this form of social media is oftentimes neglected is because it does not have a high level of self-disclosure which was a commonality in both Facebook and Twitter. Content communities, like Youtube, do however, have extremely high ratings in media richness because they allow the sharing of pictures, videos and audio. These capabilities proved very useful in the Arab Spring as activists were able to upload grotesque and violent images that accelerated mobilization. Also, the fact that these communities are low in self disclosure proved to be beneficial as activists who posted videos were able to circulate suppressed information without making their identity public.

3. U.S. State Department to Announce $28 Million in Grants for Internet Activists

Dylan Byers in, *U.S. State Department to Announce $28 Million in Grants for Internet Activists,* briefly discusses how the U.S. administration is planning on supporting the social media activism taking place in much of the Arab world. The primary source of encouragement is in the form of a $28 million monetary contribution from the State Department. Other forms of support include providing activists with the "technology to erase any incriminating data from mobile phones showing their involvement in the Arab Spring uprisings, as well as software to maintain the life of websites that the regime targets for termination" (1). The goal for providing such technology and financial support is to aid the activists in keeping the mobilization alive, although the governments are doing everything in their power to block social networking sites and track activists. In speaking on this issue, Hillary Clinton states that "we will stand with those who exercise their fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly in a peaceful way, whether in person, in print, or in pixels on the Internet" (1).

4. Public Diplomacy 2.0: Where the U.S. Government Meets "New Media

In *Public Diplomacy 2.0: Where the U.S. Government Meets "New Media",* Helle Dale writes on the role that social media had in the 2011 Arab Spring. As the entire world watched the events in Egypt unfold, many wondered what the U.S. is doing with regard to social media, and how do they plan to implement it as a democracy promotion tool. Although one can only guess what the U.S. will do going forward, Dale presents us with an overview of how social media has come to take its place as a public diplomacy tactic.

After the events this year, experts within the U.S. government are earnestly exploring the potential social media has to win the hearts and minds of people domestically and abroad, especially in the Middle Eastern region where we are currently in a war of ideas. Matt Armstrong, a public affairs blogger, summarizes it perfectly when he says, "in this age of mass information and precision guided media, everyone from political candidates to terrorists must instantly and continuously interact with and influence audiences in order to be relevant and competitive" (1). He draws the conclusion that whoever

doesn't utilize social media to the best of their abilities will essentially lose the battle of people's minds.

This is not lost on the current U.S. administration, or the past several administrations for that matter. For example, in Dale's article we learn that the Obama administration came into office with a great understanding of the importance of social media, having run the most tech-savvy campaign in American history. In fact, new media outreach as a form of public diplomacy is a primary objective of the State Department under Judith McHale, the new Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy.

As stated earlier, Obama's administration was not the first to explore the idea of Internet and social media as a means of political communications. During the Clinton administration, Joseph Duffey, director of the United States Information Agency (USIA), opted to use computer platforms for certain USIA activities as opposed to more costly print publications. Although this was but a minor attempt to integrate newer technologies, the government became further dedicated in 2000 when USIA was absorbed by the State Department, allowing for even greater opportunities. In fact, "in 2000, Ira Magaziner, President Clinton's 'Internet czar' briefed State Department officials on the need for the United States to become more engaged in public diplomacy. As the Internet was quickly becoming more deeply integrated into everyday life, he argued that the average person could now be linked to near-unlimited amounts of information, necessitating greater openness and engagement on the part of government" (3). This zeal for advancing the capability of public diplomacy was echoed by Senator George Allen in 2001 when he referred to the Internet as "'a modern day version of Gutenberg's printing press,' advocating its use to 'disperse our ideas,' spreading democratic ideals within previously inaccessible societies worldwide, '[hopefully] leading to greater liberties'" (3).

Next up to bat was the Bush administration. It was during this administration that the government started to implement the use of Facebook, among other social networking sites, in their outreach attempts to the U.S. public and those abroad. It was actually the intention of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to set up a website called America.gov, where people could visit and chat online with U.S. diplomats. This website also featured American life, as well as activities of President Bush, and served as a platform for interactive media such as webcasts, blogs, videos, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and even Second

Life, a 3-D virtual world.

Coming full circle, Dale goes into further detail about the doings of the Obama administration, as well as some lessons learned. When Obama first came into office, it was one of the goals on his political agenda to fully integrate social media and other 21st century technology into his public diplomacy efforts. In fact, on his first day in office, President Obama signed a memorandum of Transparency and Open Government, which stated that the Web 2.0 technologies are necessary to "tap into the vast amounts of knowledge…in communities across the country" and from around the world (4). With this in mind, Obama appointed Judith McHale, former president and CEO of Discovery Communications, as Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. She states:

> New technology, used effectively and creatively, can be a game changer. Communications advances provide unprecedented opportunities to engage people directly, to connect them to one another, and to dramatically scale up main traditional public diplomacy efforts. They provide the opportunity to move from an old paradigm, in which our government speaks as one to many, to a new model of engaging interactively and collaboratively across lines that might otherwise divide us from people around the world. We must create an institutional framework that can take full advantage of new media, with an understanding that these new tools must be carefully tailored to particular circumstances and always used in the service of a larger strategy. (4)

To date, the most important illustration of President Obama's commitment to technology as a mechanism of public diplomacy was the mass distribution of his speech in Cairo, which spoke of his desire to improve Arab-American relations. In an effort to circulate this speech to as many people as possible, the U.S. government applied a variety of Internet applications including, but not limited to,

social networking sites, podcasts, and a live Webcast on the White House's website. Also, the use of text messages and Twitter updates played a large role in Obama's public diplomacy efforts. An interesting data point is that the text messages were not sent to anyone within the United States, but were sent to over 20,000 people, primarily in the Middle East and Asia. The text messages were available in Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, and eight other languages, reaching people in more than 200 countries. Translated versions of the speech were available on YouTube, Facebook, and MySpace, as well as the popular South Asian networking site, Orkut

While the Obama administration has benefited from the many opportunities to use social media, there have also been some failures, which have presented themselves as learning experiences moving forward. For example, the use of social networking tools in Iran illustrates both the opportunities and the downsides of Web 2.0. On one side, the Iranian citizens were able to use technology to act as reporters and share stories instantaneously on social media sites as well as with international media outlets. Because of this, international reporters who were prevented by the Iranian government from covering the stories were forced to rely on crowdsourcing technology for their stories.

However, everything changed after the Iranian government shut down Internet service nationwide, along with blocking access to mobile networks, satellite television and many other media forms. It was at this point that the U.S. made its greatest mistake. Instead of supporting the people of Iran who were in dire need of help in influencing the election, they took a more hands-off approach and as a result, missed out on a great opportunity to help build a democracy in Iran. Yet, from the experience in Iran and now in Egypt, the U.S. has learned that when used strategically, social media offers great potential for promoting the U.S. public diplomacy efforts to younger, tech-savvy audiences around the world.

5. Cold War Broadcasting Impact

In *Cold War Broadcasting Impact*, the scholars who participated in the conference discuss the role which radio broadcasting had in defeating the USSR during the Cold War. First recounting the creation of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, we are then led into how these broadcast stations were

able to successfully use soft power to engage their Eastern European target audience and enact public diplomacy.

Radio Free Liberty (RL) and Radio Free Europe (RFE) arose out of the post WWII period. It was at this at this point that tension between the U.S and the USSR had become so volatile that nations were gearing up for a WWIII. Much of the tension stemmed from the fact that both nations had contradicting political ideologies and were both on a mission to absorb as much power and support as possible. Although the Soviet Union was already on its way to building a Communist Empire that would encompass all of Eastern Europe, the U.S. opposition climaxed when the North Koreans, trained by the Soviets, invaded South Korea. The conference report points out that this invasion occurred only days before RFE was set to debut.

The idea for RFE was first introduced by President Truman well before the invasion of South Korea. The plan was to utilize this station as a means for exiled Eastern European political leaders to communicate and inspire those who still existed behind the communist borders in hopes that they could deter Soviet influence. When the North Koreans and Soviets attacked the South Koreans, there was no doubt that the RFE and RL would be put to use to combat communism, as radio was the only medium that had the ability to penetrate the Soviet block.

The report points out an interesting data point – that the RFE was a decentralized operation. While the headquarters was located in Washington D.C., there were multiple states that controlled their national broadcast services. These included Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania. Part of what made RFE so successful was the fact that each country had its own operation and was, therefore, able to enjoy a degree of autonomy. This particular setup helped each service relate to their own audience, which in turn built stronger connections.

One of the scholars, J.F Brown, describes the purpose of RFE to be a channel, which "serves the peoples of Eastern Europe by keeping them company, upholding their dignity, bolstering their confidence,

strengthening their 'European-ness' and their historic ties to America, while giving them hope that 'this too would pass'" (7). While RFE attempted to do just this, the listeners were not unsuspecting, as they had to be suspicious while living under the Soviet establishment. Over time, however, and after proving itself to be an accurate and practical service, RFE was able to overcome such reservations.

It was not until 1959, nearly 10 years after the debut of RFE that Radio Liberation became what we now know as Radio Liberty. The idea behind this broadcast service was that, instead of focusing on strengthening Eastern European pride, it provided a channel of free speech so that fellow Eastern Europeans in America could voice their opinions. The overall objective was to provide a source of information, promoting their right to have the freedom of choice for Soviet nationalities, the freedom of conscience and religion, the ability to eliminate the system of terror and forced labor, the ability to end Party control of the arts and sciences, and finally the end of aggressive Soviet foreign policy by the overthrow of the regime (7). The hope for this broadcast service was to make those living within the confines of Communist Europe to feel as if the U.S. recognized them, their culture, their language and, ultimately, their separate existence from the USSR.

The RL was unfortunately also known for venting its hatred of the Communist regime. However, under Boris Shub, this approach was changed as he felt that RL needed to better understand and appreciate the vulnerability of the typical Soviet listener, who, chances were, was very proud of his country and his identity. Shub felt that such blatant propaganda would repel the listeners, and as a result, he implemented an approach that was geared towards being honest, relating to the daily struggles and hoping for a better future. In accomplishing this, RL set up monitoring posts so they could examine broadcasts from all across the USSR, including little local stations that did not have the ability to broadcast nationally. This helped RL gain some legitimacy among the public as they filled a rather large news void. Another tactic that made RL seem more credible was the illegal airing of Khrushchev's secret speech condemning Stalin's crimes, as well as censored novels by famous Russian and American authors.

Istvan Rev stressed that this Cold War period and the use of media and technology indicated that it was essentially "a war of ideas and the victor would be the side that successfully implanted its vision in the 'other's' populace (10). With this said, it is clear that the purpose of radio was to win the hearts and minds of the Soviet citizens. RL and RFE were able to accomplish this by using three different tactics. According to the report, these broadcasting services were appealing because they provided news that was of personal interest to the public and that was censored in USSR media, the important news was broadcasted quickly, and, most importantly, because they offered different opinions on important issues. The services were also very patient with their task of implementing public diplomacy. They understood that this was something that would require building a sense of trust as well as playing the role of background noise that would permeate society and, over the years, eventually lead to change.

6. Seismic Shift: Understanding Change in the Middle East

The Stimson Center, in hopes of analyzing the rise of 2011 Arab Spring, brought together various experts within the field of foreign policy, democracy promotion, public diplomacy and communications to give some insight into what caused the events, who was involved, how it gained momentum and what this means for the U.S who desires to regain a Middle Eastern democratic ally. The document created by these experts, *Seismic Shift: Understanding Change in the Middle East*, highlights many of the environmental and cultural elements which contributed to the climate promoting grass roots change.

This collaborative effort revealed in detail the changing political climate, which stimulated the unrest from 2005 to 2010. In particular, there were three important turning points, one of which was the labor strikes that became regular occurrences since 2004. Over time, as oppression worsened, whenever opposition groups arranged a strike they gained more activists, became harder to ignore and grew in frequency. Many U.S. organizations located in Egypt viewed this as an ideal situation and began to strategize how to mobilize the youth for democracy promotion. The second catalyst included the Facebook campaign for Khaled Said, a victim who was tortured and received the ultimate penalty of

death for speaking his mind. This campaign, however, was more than a strike as it brought mobilization into the realm of communication and social media. This marked a milestone as it signified the potential to use social media as a tool for online activism, which was then transformed into offline mobilization. The third and final turning point consisted of the 2010 legislative elections, which essentially was the straw that broke the camel's back. At this point, Egyptians had been protesting for over 5 years and looked to this election as a chance to take back their country. On the contrary, the regime was not inclined to let this happen and, as a result, manipulated the elections. This created uproar in the Egyptian society as many had high expectations for the elections and participated in campaigns to get citizens to vote.

Seeing the potential to mobilize these Egyptians, the U.S. government worked through NGOs to employ various strategies to deal with increased oppression. For example, "The International Republican Institute (IRI) opted to maintain a low-level presence in Egypt, but conduct all of its training of Egyptian activists outside the country to deflect government pressure. In this manner, they managed to train 1,200 Egyptians via programs in the region or in the United States" (53). Other organizations such as Freedom House, the National Endowment for Democracy and the Solidarity Center did not operate from within Egypt but from regional offices instead. Many of these organizations experienced firsthand harassment and the deteriorating situation under the repressive regime. There was widespread corruption, regular use of torture, worsening socioeconomic conditions and little to no political freedom. Together, these conditions provided the recipe for an explosive mix. It was these U.S. NGOs that were there organizing themselves and preparing to play a supportive role.

While engaging with the oppositional groups proved to have potential for democracy promotion, the NGOs only chose to utilize them because it was nearly impossible to penetrate formal political organizations and parties. Therefore engagement with human rights and youth activists was a default strategy as IRI noted in stating "it had become clear that there was no real opportunity for reform within political parties or formal structures. As a result, we reached out to youth groups and NGOs" (58). However, this proved to be beneficial for both the U.S. NGOs and the activists. While the NGOs found an

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even more influential democracy promotion tool, the Egyptian citizens who were fed up with the regime found an ally. Previously, the public sphere remained almost completely detached from any political party or institution. As a result, they had no way to convert their beliefs and their concerns into concrete political outcomes. By acting in accordance with the NGOs, the activists now were able to get the support they desired and direct their energy towards a goal.

While this seemed like a match made in heaven, it soon slowed to a halt. In 2006 the U.S. administration ordered the discontinuation of its democracy promotion agenda due to the election of Hamas in Palestine. As a result, political activism was at a standstill and the regime increased tactics of repression. The experts believe that the revival of oppressive measures signaled that the Egyptian administration lacked confidence in its power, and therefore jumped at the opportunity to regain control once the U.S. was forced to pull back its efforts. The analysts also perceive that this removal of democracy promotion confirms that the United States and Western powers were inconsistent and ineffective in pressuring regimes to reform out of concern that political Islam was the only alternative political force.

Although the U.S. was no longer formally participating in democracy promotion activities, the situation in Egypt was still in dire need of reform, and the activists had not given up trying to build a coalition. Jared Cohen's book *Children of Jihad* describes how eager the youth activists were for change. He "stresses the 'reachable-ness' of the region's huge under-30 generation, a group in tune with 'a common set of norms and values characteristic of young people around the world regardless of religion, nationality, or ethnicity… they all want to feel as though they belong [and] have a purpose in this world, and can have a better life'" (69). It was this drive that kept the dream of reform alive. When the Egyptian government resurrected and expanded Internet access across the nation in hopes that it would help Western nations perceive Egypt as a forward thinking and modern nation, activists found their opening. It was then that social media began to take a primary role in the Arab uprisings.

NGOs soon realized that the tech-savvy youth and the accessibility of social media provided all of the elements necessary to successfully promote change. Social media had the potential to serve as the "free space" that would be able to foster public support of mobilization without much censorship from the regime. As a result, many organizations shifted their democracy promotion programs to focus primarily on training youth activists in using social media for political mobilization. For example, NDI partnered with organizations such as Google to hold media conferences that brought together activists across the region to help them learn how to use new media tools for mobilization (57). They focused on Facebook, which was quickly becoming the number one form of online communication. Experts at the conference highlighted Facebook's multiplatform abilities, such as video, photos and links, as effective tools for mobilization. NDI also brought Obama campaign experts to Egypt on multiple occasions in response to increased interest in the mobilization aspects of social media.

With social media now being the official platform of the Arab uprising, statistics may be the only way to clearly depict how social media popularized in the years leading up to the revolution. The Stimson document reads "between 2005 and 2011, Internet access in the region expanded from 13 percent to 40 percent of the population" (77). Much of this jump in percentage had to do with the introduction of Twitter and Facebook in 2007, which have continued to grow at an exponential rate. In Egypt alone, there are 17 million Facebook users, comprising roughly 13% of the Egyptian population. Additionally, mobile phones, which had penetration rates of over 100%, fueled the use of mobile social media. When mobile phones were coupled with sites such as Twitter and YouTube, the outcome was deadly for the administration. Because of the ability to instantly document and upload real-time videos to thousands of followers, the information quickly radiated outwards to transnational activist organizations and journalists creating the global dissent which was needed to validate the regime's removal.

7. Public Diplomacy in Grand Strategy

In *Public Diplomacy in Grand Strategy,* Ben Mor explores the relationship between public diplomacy and hard power, which are two concepts not often thought to be interrelated. In doing so, he applied the grand-strategic perspective, which based on the claim that states should look to achieve peace and security through both domestic and international resources. Through his discussion, Ben Mor made some very astute claims specifically regarding the importance and growing influence of public diplomacy due to the changing nature of the global environment. His statement, "the modern battlefield, as it was revealed in the Iraq War, is as much concerned with how military power is captured by the camera and portrayed in the media as it is with how this power is applied against the enemy" reveals much about strategic international relations in the 21st century (157).

The state of global relations today is indicative of a new international norm, one that has been impacted by the communications revolution and the expansion of democratic norms. This norm consists of fighting over the hearts and minds of global civilians in order to justify any policy or action to promote one's political agenda. Media has become the most effective channel of influence in this regard. Images portrayed by the media hold an inexplicable amount of weight as they greatly influence the reputation of nations, even if the reputations are not entirely accurate. The reputation which media portrays is ultimately intended to persuade foreign publics, especially foreign elites, that the values and policies of the U.S. are incontrovertible and that U.S. actions, therefore, deserve their support. This indicates that media is an essential tool for impression management and foreign policy implementation. Mor addresses this notion in stating that "a government's process of communicating with foreign publics is an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies" (160).

As briefly stated above, there are several developments that have created the ideal environment for the growth of public diplomacy. The first trend was the mass expansion of democratic values, or democratization. Post-Cold war, the number of countries with democratic systems more than doubled in

the 1990's alone. Along with this ideological expansion, the idea of public opinion has received wide recognition and become a critical factor in determining foreign policies. The second trend was the outcome of the Cold War itself, and the fact that it inspired U.S. global standards. One of these standards consists of understanding that influencing public opinion is more effectively accomplished through soft power, as opposed to hard power or force which does not align with the role of persuasion in a democratic society. The final trend, as previously stated, is the communications revolution of which we are still currently in the midst. The implications of the revolution we are finding is that previously maintained state barriers are no longer effective, therefore allowing globalization and the homogenization of knowledge and perceptions (161). As a result, people are becoming less dependent on their institutions for information and instead are looking elsewhere. Ultimately, as people are seeking more information and knowledge from outside their state, this increases the potential for direct communication and soft power influence.

A critical aspect of public diplomacy that Mor considers is the ability of media to influence the public. He looks at both opportunities and constraints of today's environment, as well as how media is evolving to increase its efficiency. One characteristic of today's media he notes is the fact that it is becoming more geared towards providing real time news and instantaneous coverage of events. He also observes that the global reach of media is constantly growing. Along with the more traditional media, satellite broadcasting has taken on a predominant role, as well as the Internet, which can be accessed using multiple devices. The modern forms of communication, which include satellite broadcasting and the Internet, are unique to the other forms in that they are particularly useful for reaching a variety of audiences, and they also provide news instantly, thereby "resulting in the final collapse of time and space in the communications environment (162). The final feature of today's media environment is that television still reigns supreme. This is partly because it can be viewed on multiple platforms, including the actual television as well as mobile devices. Another reason why television is still viewed as most effective for political purposes is because all judgments made and the context perceived is entirely

dependent upon the image and emotional drama being portrayed. Therefore, the opinions of the public can be easily swayed based on the selected images, which oftentimes promote some political agenda.

These characteristics of effective modern media provided by Mor are useful in helping one to understand the phenomenon of the CNN effect and why it is becoming an increasingly important element in public diplomacy. This is explained further by Mor when he says, "public Diplomacy seeks to capitalize on the CNN effect – to convey self-interested information through the new media in the assumption that the media, by affecting foreign public opinion, is capable of exerting political influence on a target government" (163).

Mor concludes *Public Diplomacy and Grand Strategy* by observing that the notion to reevaluate the concept of grand strategy and directing more attention to the role of public diplomacy has become readily apparent after the events on 9/11. Since then, public diplomacy and the need to influence the public through media has become a political objective. And while modern day media has made this objective attainable, it has also made communication unpredictable and hard to control. For example, current media has become heavily dependent on civilian reporters who can attain images and send messages in real time from the epicenter of events. This, however, has led to the loss of media management. The increased amount of media transparency has effects, both positive and negative. Mor warns that with increased transparency comes the responsibility to act in accordance to the beliefs and opinions of the public, even when taking action does not benefit political agendas or foreign policies.

8. U.S. Groups Helped Nurture Arab Uprisings

Ron Nixon uncovers a unique stance with regard to the 2011 Egyptian uprising which resulted in the ousting of former president Hosni Mubarak. As opposed to the more commonly accepted notion that the Egyptian opposition groups led the revolution themselves, without any support from the United States, Nixon attempts to uncover what many suspect of being true: that several U.S. organizations were a

critical element and helped to foster the uprisings. This position is very controversial, not only to Egyptians, but to many other nations, cultural groups and American's alike who feel that the U.S. administration too often acts as global police, intervening in conflicts and taking on the title of a liberator, when many believe that such actions are executed because they are in accordance of the U.S. democracy promotion agenda. The fact that the Egyptians received full credit for expelling the authoritative regime, which oppressed the nation for decades, was not only surprising, but celebrated. Since its achievement, Egyptians have gained a sense of pride and are rejoicing in taking back control of their country.

While it is generally accepted that the U.S. had no involvement in the Egyptian uprising, Nixon points out a fact that has not been widely broadcasted – that many of the key leaders in the opposition movements had been trained and received funding from the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House, nonprofit human rights organizations headquartered in Washington, D.C. The article points out that "the Republican and Democratic institutes were created by Congress and are financed through the National Endowment for Democracy, which was set up in 1983 to channel grants for promoting democracy in developing nations. The National Endowment receives about $100 million annually from Congress (1). Freedom House also receives funding for its humanitarian efforts directly from the U.S. State Department.

While monetary funding is an indirect act of support, the claim that many Egyptian opposition leaders were trained in New York in 2008 is a much more substantial link that could tie the U.S. to the Egyptian revolutions. It is said that while in New York, "they were taught to use social networking and mobile technologies to promote democracy. And those supporting the meeting were Facebook, Google, MTV, Columbia Law School and the State Department" (1).

Nixon also notes that although many activists thought it was in their best interest to receive support from U.S. organizations, they maintained their skepticism about the United State's credibility. It was said that many of the participating activists, when interviewed, were very frank about the fact that they view the U.S. as hypocrite for helping them revolt against the administration, while they still provided the regime $1.5 billion annually in military and economic aid. This skepticism runs deep within the Egyptian

community and may pose a problem in the future if the U.S. administration attempts to formally insert itself in the country's democracy building efforts.

9. Public Diplomacy and Soft Power

In *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power,* Joseph S. Nye discusses the concepts of soft power and public diplomacy with regard to the U.S. political agenda. In doing this, they briefly outline the history of public diplomacy and how it has come to represent a crucial tactic in garnering support for American international policies and the expansion of its sphere of influence. Special attention has been paid to how, in today's current environment, soft power and public diplomacy have been realized as the most important persuasive tool, especially with nations that have recently overcome oppressive regimes and have the potential to become allies in regions that have been consistent in their skepticism, and sometimes resentment, towards Western ideals and political arrogance.

Nye believes that America has the ability to achieve power, which is the ability to influence others in order to attain the outcomes you want, in three ways. These include coercion, incentives and attraction. The latter, which encompasses the idea of convincing one to emulate, admire and aspire to certain lifestyles and ideals, has gained momentum in the past several decades. They introduce this tactic as "soft power—getting others to want the outcomes that you want—co-opting people rather than coercing them" (95). However, it is argued that there is a difference between power measured in behavioral outcomes and power measured in resources. It is this difference that denotes the relationship between soft power and public diplomacy. For example, soft power arises from resources in the form of values expressed in culture, in internal practices and policies, and how one relates to others. Public diplomacy on the other hand "is an instrument that governments use to mobilize these resources to communicate with and attract the publics of other countries, rather than merely their governments" (95). It is through public diplomacy that one can draw attention to these resources through media, cultural exchanges, NGOs, diplomats and embassies, broadcasting, subsidizing cultural exports, arranging exchanges, and so forth. But if the

content of a country's culture, values, and policies are not attractive, public diplomacy that "broadcasts" them cannot produce soft power.

Nye quotes a German editor, Josef Joffe, who once argued that America's soft power was more powerful and valuable than its economic and military assets. He states "U.S. culture, low-brow or high, radiates outward with an intensity last seen in the days of the Roman Empire—but with a novel twist. Rome's and Soviet Russia's cultural sway stopped exactly at their military borders. America's soft power, though, rules over an empire on which the sun never sets" (96). In recent years, however, this idealistic image of U.S. positive influence has been tainted by the implementation of policies that were considered illegitimate, such as the decision to enter into the "War on Terror" for WMD when none were found. A statistic that documents this increasing skepticism of American intervention is seen in a 2007 BBC opinion poll, which reported that across twenty-five countries, over half of those polled said the United States played a mainly negative role in the world.

Nye speculates that this negative impression of America has risen due to the lack of public diplomacy and soft power during the years following the Cold War. It was during this time that the U.S. administration felt overly confident in their newfound role of Superpower, which ultimately resulted in interventions and foreign policy decisions that were executed without soft power as a precursor. After years of provoking a feeling of resentment in international communities, it was the event of September 11th that caused the American administration began to rediscover the importance of investing in soft power and reputation building.

Now that the U.S. has re-employed the idea of soft power and public diplomacy as part of their strategic approach to foster international support in their policies, the process and application has evolved to meet the needs of the current international environment. Instead of focusing their efforts on countries like Saudi Arabia or China, where the governments control information, the government is reevaluating their approach, and is now aiming to garner favorable public opinion in countries like Egypt, where they can take advantage of the vulnerable state of the nation and create an ally in the midst of a region that has been largely impenetrable. Nye further documents this strategy by explaining that:

shaping public opinion becomes even more important where authoritarian governments have been replaced. But even when the foreign leaders are friendly, their leeway may be limited if their publics and parliaments have a negative image of the United States. In such circumstances, diplomacy aimed at public opinion can become as important to outcomes as the traditional classified diplomatic communications among leaders. (99)

Now that shifting public opinion has become the goal of international relations, credible communication has become of the utmost importance. In the age of information, where people are constantly inundated by media and messages, successful policy making is less about whose military or economy wins, but whose story wins. In such an environment, governments are using media to compete with each other and with other organizations in order to enhance their own credibility and weaken that of their opponents.

In order for media to be successful and have a positive impact among foreign populations, government must gain a better understanding of these individuals and hold them and their values in high regard. "By definition, soft power means getting others to want the same outcomes you want, and that requires an understanding of how they are hearing your messages and adapting them accordingly. It is therefore crucial to understand the target audience" (103).

It is for this reason that the Internet and social media will likely become the future of international communications for the purpose of policy building. Although the Internet is mainly available to the elites in many developing nations, its flexibility and interactive features allow for the targeting of messages to particular groups. It is also useful because it provides a channel in which information can be distributed with less interference from oppressive regimes than might be feasible with other forms of media.

10. The Future of Power

In Joseph Nye's book, <u>The Future of Power</u>, he discusses how the power dynamics of this generation are evolving as a result of the changing political environment and technological advancements. Specifically, he notes that much of the change in the international political environment surrounds the information revolution and the fact that the costs of communications are decreasing rapidly. Instead of international communication being a luxury of the government, its corporations or its elite, today, communication is virtually free to anyone who has access to the internet. This is perfectly depicted when Nye states, "the barriers to entry have been lowered, and non-state actors now crowd the stage" (xvi). As a result of the lowered communications barriers, the control that once belonged to individual countries is now becoming more dispersed. Nye believes that even the American government cannot achieve all of their foreign policy agendas acting alone…"in this sense, power becomes a positive-sum game. It is not enough to think in terms of power *over* others. We must also think in terms of power *to* accomplish goals that involves power *with* others" (xvii). With that said, networks and connectedness have become two of the most important sources of power today, as empowering others is critical to one's success now more than ever.

In discussing the idea of building transnational connectedness, Nye turns his attention to the concept of soft power as it is gaining recognition as a long-term approach of achieving desired outcomes with regard to public diplomacy. For example, he states that "when a government is concerned about structural milieu goals or general value objectives, such as promotion of democracy, human rights, and freedom, it is often the case that soft power turns out to be superior to hard power" (84). However, in his discussion, he makes sure to be objective in his reasonings and explains many of the challenges that come with this form of power. For example, in order for soft power to work, it is dependent upon credibility and the public opinions surrounding certain decisions and actions. When governments are seen as manipulative or as propagandists, credibility is destroyed and with it any potential influence. It is for this reason that Nye highlights the importance of pull, rather than push, when it comes to building credibility.

Soft power is also never a sure strategy because the instruments and vehicles of this power are never fully under the control of the government, and the success of the effort is really determined by the target. So as opposed to the control derived from hard power, soft power truly relies on third parties and building influence. Also, hard power tends to be a short-term process through force, whereas the results of soft power tend to take a longer period of time, which can sometimes be problematic as politicians and the public at large may lose patience and want to see a faster return on their investments. Therefore, soft power can be a win-lose strategy, because as Nye states, "soft power may appear less risky than economic or military power, but it is often hard to use, easy to lose and costly to reestablish" (83).

Nye also analyzes how to successfully incorporate soft power into a political strategy. According to his study, successful implementation relies on three resources:

➢ The primary resource is a county's culture. When attempting to utilize this resource successfully, it is critical that the primary nation attractively portrays itself to the target nation.

➢ Following culture is political value. In this case, to successfully implement this resource, the nation must be able to consistently promote and live up to the values that make up the foundation of the nation and it's administration.

➢ The final resource is foreign policy. When using this as a resource, the primary nation must portray its policies as legitimate and as having a moral authority (84).

In describing these resources, Nye points out that the conditions are the key to successfully utilizing soft power as weapons of influence and attraction.

In The Future of Power, Joseph Nye poses the question, what generates attraction? In answering this question he states that we, as humans, tend to like those who are more similar to us than they are different, whether this is through physical characteristics or shared attitudes. Taking this point of shared attitudes further, Nye makes the point that American values are by no means universal. However, there

are similar values that are becoming increasingly important in the information age where people desire increased participation and the freedom of expression. These desires will ultimately provide the foundation for soft power. However, because soft power is a two-way relationship, this also means that the U.S will also have to live up to the values shared by the target if they hope to remain attractive.

In building attraction, it was explained that an actor typically implements a variety of programs in the form of public diplomacy, broadcasting, cultural exchanges and humanitarian assistance. Once these programs are in place, they can then affect the target directly or indirectly depending on who within the target is impacted. For example, if leaders are attracted and persuaded to change to a certain viewpoint, that would be considered direct influence. However, if the public or the media are influenced, it is considered indirect influence, as well as a ground up approach to creating an enabling environment that will in turn persuade the elites and leaders to make certain decisions.

Nye makes an interesting point when he states that almost half the nations in the world are democracies. He argues that the nature of a democracy provides the ideal environment in which to aim diplomacy efforts, as one of the key characteristics of a democracy, public opinion, is becoming just as important as the direct approach mentioned above. Unfortunately, because of technology's ability to make communication and information sharing that much easier, there is now an explosion of information so that many non-state actors have access to information and the power it contains. Nye describes this as a "paradox of plenty" which will ultimately lead to a scarcity of attention rather than information (103). This is where media resources come into play, as they have the influence and ability to determine what is considered valuable information, which is a powerful trait to have during a time and place where public opinion is gaining momentum.

11. Restructuring U.S. Foreign Assistance in The Wake of the Arab Spring

In order to maintain ties in the Middle East, namely with Egypt, one of the more influential of the Middle Eastern nations, the U.S. has resorted to providing foreign aid which has become the most significant and wide-reaching channel of involvement in the Middle East. Mathew O'Sullivan, in *Restructuring U.S. Foreign Assistance In the Wake of the Arab Spring,* states that Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Yemen and the Palestinian Authority received nearly $2 billion in 2011 for military and security assistance. Of that $2 billion, Egypt received $1.3 billion for military support (1). However, this attempt to solidify a relationship with the Egyptian nation did not reflect well to the Egyptian public. One reason the public is resistant to accept support from the U.S. is because of America's long standing reputation of supporting Egypt's oppressive regimes in an attempt to build an ally in the Middle East. It is for this reason that, even now after Mubarak, they object to any relations with the U.S. along with any other foreign power that helped the regime maintain power. Another reason why the Egyptian public resents U.S financial assistance is because strengthening the military could have a negative impact on the new democratic process in the post-Mubarak Egypt. As a result of America's unrelenting attempts to insert its influence in the vulnerable state Egypt is currently in, "favorable attitudes toward the United States in the Middle East are lower now than they were in 2008, during the last year of George W. Bush's presidency" (1).

The increasingly negative attitude towards the U.S. has inspired the Obama administration to take a new approach in strengthening international relationships. Instead of taking a top-down approach and funding military efforts, the administration now aims to implement bottom-up policies such as investing in small companies and public-private partnerships to stabilize the economy and improve the unemployment rates. It also hopes to empower citizens to become politically involved and demonstrate that Washington is interested in supporting the people of the Middle East, and not just the governments that uphold U.S. policy.

According to O'Sullivan, "in the Arab world today, progress toward prosperity and representative government is being driven chiefly at the sub-national level, and it will behoove the U.S. to provide support accordingly and trust that communities and local, private organizations are best suited to work toward their own development" (1). With this said, one could conclude that if the U.S hopes to maintain its ally, it will have to win over the people and prove that the U.S can be a worthwhile partner in the pursuit of economic and political empowerment.

12. Public Diplomacy and Transformation of International Broadcasting

In Public Diplomacy and Transformation of International Broadcasting, Monroe Price makes the case that international broadcasting, such as radio and television, "is the elegant term for a complex combination of state-sponsored news, information, and entertainment directed at a population outside the sponsoring states boundaries" (72). In targeting foreign populations, the use of this form of technology provides the potential for one nation to shape the opinion of the people and leaders of another. The purpose of using international broadcasting for swaying public opinion lies in the fact that people are the key to influencing foreign policies. This was exemplified in the Cold War, where not one weapon was used, but instead, radio broadcasting. In speaking on this example, Price states that "Western invasion was by radio, which was mightier than the sword" (75)

The use of international broadcasting to influence populations in another nation is accomplished through the use of various promotional styles, which depend on several factors. These influence the broadcasting history within the targeted nation, the response of the society targeted, the specific foreign policies to be achieved, the amount of overt political involvement at home, and the conveyance of the target's culture.

Specifically talked about is Voice of America, which through WWII and the Cold War was the primary state controlled international broadcasting vehicle. Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe came into existence following the end of the Cold War. Although these three radio broadcasting vehicles were, in fact, state controlled and funded, for decades, they maintained that they were independent from the

government and privately funded. The clandestine relationship ended, however, once the radio stations merged and the federal government acknowledged its financing role.

Once the Cold War ended, use of international broadcasting slowed, and with it, credibility, financing, and the desire to target public opinion. It was not until the more recent war on terrorism that the usefulness of international broadcasting was reassessed. At this time, new modes of communication, such as CNN, were making their mark in international relations. Many began to object the existence of VOA and the other state controlled stations.

CNN's reputation grew rapidly and changed the nature of international broadcasting and international media relations. Price states that "in the mid 1990's, the institutions of international broadcasting were under pressure from the great private media moguls and their political counterparts. They argued that international broadcasting was unnecessary in the age of CNN" (81). It was at this point that CNN became the primary method of targeting foreign populations and influencing them to support U.S. foreign policies.

13. The CNN Effect Reconsidered: Mapping a Research Agenda for the Future

In *The CNN Effect Reconsidered: Mapping a Research Agenda for the Future,* Piers Robinson discusses the concept of the CNN Effect and attempts to interpret scholarly research to determine if it does in fact influence foreign policy, and if so, in what regard. In giving a brief background, Robinson reveals that the CNN concept initially grew out of the 1990's when Ted Turner introduced the idea of broadcasting live coverage of international crises. As CNN popularized, it grew to be a symbol of new and advanced media, which, unlike more traditional media of that time, had the capacity to be influential to the public. As a result, CNN media moguls formed alliances with political forces that deemed the 21st century to be the age of CNN. This so-called trend forced pressure upon various institutions within the media industry that were struggling to maintain a media presence.

Although some traditional forms of media were known to have an impact on international relations

in the past, the use of CNN to report highly visual and real time images of the Gulf War, Tiananmen Square and humanitarian crises in Somalia indicated that a significant change would be made to conflict reporting and how political agendas would be promoted. The success of CNN in promoting political agendas and endorsing decisions to become involved in such international crises resulted from the use of graphic and emotive reporting which would stimulate a public outcry and support for intervention.

Robinson, in analyzing the CNN Effect, also mentions that there are factors that influence the degree to which the televised news supports and backs political agendas. In making his argument, he includes the work of several scholars. For example, Robinson states that:

> Gadi Wolfsfeld's (1997) *political contest model* and Robert Entman's (2004) *cascading activation model* both identify elite dissensus as a key situational variable which allows greater media independence. Most recently, Baum and Groeling's (2009) theoretical contribution to understanding the dynamics of wartime media–state relations and public opinion acknowledges elite criticism of the White House as an important factor in leading news media to play a more influential role. Indeed, for them, a large part of the significance of media in terms of influencing public opinion and policy lies in its propensity to over-report officials (elites) who criticize a president's wartime policies. Of course, the corollary of this position is that high levels of elite-consensus (policy certainty) are likely to inhibit media influence. Here, there exists substantial evidence for the tendency of media to become submissive when governments and elites are clearly decided on a course of action. (6)

An example of the latter argument is exemplified during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In reporting this event, CNN offered very little criticism leading up to the invasion as the administration was using all of its

faculties to spread recognition of Iraq's threat of WMD and ultimately gain support for its decision. Events such as these indicate that the media can be, and oftentimes is used to serve the interest of the state.

14. U.S Secretly Backed the Brotherhood's Soft Power Strategy in Egypt

In Yoichi Shimatsu's article, the claim is made that the U.S. government was indirectly involved in the 2011 Arab Spring. Shimatsu draws attention to the fact that many U.S. NGOs, which were financed by the U.S. government, brought key activists to New York where they were introduced to the State Department staff and trained to use social media for grassroots mobilization and democracy promotion. A key figure in this article is Jared Cohen, a State Department staffer who is said to have helped plan and execute earlier uprisings, particularly the April 6th movement. The article also indicates that Cohen was a vital part of training activists to use social media as he organized various conferences "sponsored by Facebook, Google, YouTube, MTV, Access 360 Media, Columbia Law School and the Public Policy Office of the State Department" (1). To further connect the U.S. administration to the uprisings, Shimatsu claims that Anne-Marie Slaughter, director of the Public Policy Office and key democracy promotion advisor to Hillary Clinton, led activist centered projects in Iran, Syria and Egypt.

15. Legitimizing `Humanitarian Intervention?

In *Legitimizing Humanitarian Intervention?: CNN, NATO and the Kosovo Crisis*, Daya Thussu analyzes how CNN's coverage of the Kosovo crisis created an opportunity for the U.S to lead the western military alliance, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, in the intervention of the internal affairs of a sovereign state for the first time in NATO's history. By positioning NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia as an issue of humanitarian intervention in a state, which was run by a repressive dictatorship, CNN was able to utilize the post-Cold War news management style to follow the agenda set by the US and its western alliance.

In following the agenda set forth by the West, the coverage that was broadcasted internationally and set the tone for global understanding of the issue, was heavily biased and showed no alternative views. A detail that was largely ignored, which would be considered newsworthy in a global context, was that NATO's role fundamentally changed from a defensive alliance to an offensive, peacekeeping organization. What is curious to Thussu, however, is that by intervening in a sovereign country that is not threatening any of the member (NATO) states, the organization was acting in violation to the 1949 charter in which it was established as a defensive-only organization whose primary concern was solely protecting Western democracies from the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the decision to bomb Yugoslavia was not approved by the UN Security Council that has total authority in deciding if the situation poses a threat to international peace, and therefore falls into the provision of international law, which allows for humanitarian intervention (347).

According to Thussu, it seems the decision to fundamentally change the nature of NATO was part of a more calculated plan. Thussu states:

> with the end of the Cold War, NATO was in danger of becoming an
> anachronism and the US, which accounts for 60% of its budget, was
> searching for a new role of the organization. Thus a peacekeeping and
> peace-enforcing role was devised for NATO, and a Rapid Reaction Force
> created to deal with humanitarian emergencies. This flexible and highly
> mobile force was to police the world's hotspots. (347)

Therefore, the next logical move for the military organization was the Kosovo crisis, where it could evolve into an offensive and international policing force. Fortunately, NATO was able to make this transition as seamless as possible by influencing CNN, which expressed no concern for the legality of the bombing, much less the implications for national sovereignty, a concept which defined international relations following the end of World War II. It was through CNN's international coverage that made

national sovereignty less of a priority than defending human rights, and ultimately created the concept of humanitarian intervention.

The main argument of CNN, which perpetuated the need for humanitarian intervention, was that the Yugoslav authorities were conducting a genocide attempt again the ethnic Albanian communities of that territory and were unwilling to participate in any form of peace talks. Interestingly enough, Thussu discusses the willingness of the Serbian government to sign a peace treaty at Rambouillet until a secret appendix was added on the last day, demanding that they surrender all of Yugoslavia to NATO occupation…and that "NATO should enjoy free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout FRY (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) including associated airspace and territorial waters, something no sovereign state would accept" (348). Also noted was that the Serbian government had passed a resolution which included a proposal for political autonomy and a peaceful resolution to the crisis. The fact that this resolution was passed and yet rejected by the U.S the day prior to NATO bombing indicates that the Rambouillet process was indeed influenced by the US view of the crisis, similar to the CNN reports which indicated nothing about the US failure to accept a peaceful solution without their involvement. Instead, CNN reported the Serbian government as unreasonable, a position much more favorable to the U.S agenda.

Because CNN is a 24-hour international news service reaching more than 150 million households in 212 countries, it is perhaps one of the most significant media vehicles with regard to informing global communities and framing international headlines. At the climax of the Kosovo crisis, CNN had over 70 journalists within the region covering the story, which one might think would give the story an international perspective. However, in examining CNN's coverage and its ability to spin a story in favor of the American agenda, Thussu analyzed two programs, CNN Worldview and CNN Insight. He determined that the war in Kosovo was characterized by a few main points, which are as follows (350):

1. CNN was uncritical in reporting NATO's actions and failed to acknowledge the change in NATO's role, the legality of the bombing on Yugoslavia, and its impact on national sovereignty. When covering the crisis, much of the reports and interviews were of US military commanders, NATO spokespersons and American experts, giving limited time to Yugoslav and Serbian leaders to express their views. This ultimately provided no objectivity.

2. The International coverage demonized the Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic and portrayed him as a brutal dictator who they often compared to Saddam Hussein. This ultimately helped to present the bombing as a moral crusade.

3. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which was pegged as a terrorist organization and international drug smugglers by the U.S government in 1998, was promoted by CNN as a group of freedom fighters.

4. CNN focused most of their attention on alleged Serbian atrocities and exaggerated the amount of Albanians killed. Images of mass graves that were taken by US spy satellites were shown regularly on CNN and claims were made that as many as 100,000 people had been executed. However, according to Thussu, "suspected massacre sites were scoured for evidence and bodies were exhumed under the supervision of prosecutors from the UN's international Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. According to ICTY's chief prosecutor, only 2100 bodies had been exhumed" (352).

According the Thussu's research, the CNN Group is "the largest and most profitable news and informational corporation in the world, and is available to more than 800 million people across the globe" (349). Making up the CNN Group are six satellite and cable networks, two radio networks, 11 websites, and over 200 international affiliates.

CNN received international recognition during the Gulf War when its reports on Baghdad and the US bombing of the Iraqi capital were shown in real-time, making it the first 'live' war seen on television. It was at this time that television became the principal source of news, as well as a source of

military and political intelligence. The presence of CNN was facilitated by satellite technology, and was in fact the first to take advantage of this technology using Intelsat, Intersputnit, PanAmSat and several regional signals, ultimately making it an international news phenomenon (355). With such a reputation, CNN has built for itself "unparalleled power to mould international public opinion and even contributed to influencing the actions of people involved in the events it was covering" (355). And as such, CNN has created a new form of TV-inspired media diplomacy.

16. Media Wars and Public Diplomacy

The article, *Media Wars and Public Diplomacy,* by Daya Thussu analyzes the use of U.S.-dominated global television news in implementing public diplomacy and as well as mediating international conflicts. He makes the argument that only the conflicts or crises that have strategic interest to the U.S appear on the western television, specifically CNN. Given the global reach and influence of CNN and the dependence of world broadcasters on U.S. supplied footage, the dominant perspectives on a conflict emulate the agenda set by the U.S. and therefore can be used as a tool to mold public opinion to support U.S. policies.

In proving his point, Thussu examines the crisis in Yugoslavia, which was one of the most important post-Cold War events and the most extensively covered catastrophes following the Gulf War. The U.S. media, specifically television, initially framed the conflict as a decade old civil war that developed out of ethnic hatred. The media also implied that the U.S. should intervene on behalf of human rights and humanitarianism. Many television networks reiterated the American administration's stance on this subject, which was that "defending human rights should override national sovereignty" (8). The widespread promotion of this mindset ultimately legitimized the concept of humanitarian intervention.

The initial strike took the form of a NATO bombing, which, according to the media, was justified because the Yugoslav government failed to come to an agreement with the Kosovo Liberation Army during the peace talks. However, what the media never revealed was that the government was willing to

sign until it was learned that the U.S. had attached a secret appendix which ordered the surrender of all Yugoslavia to NATO (8). The media also failed to report the passing of a resolution the day before the NATO bombing, which proposed sovereignty for Kosovo. All the same, NATO rejected the proposal and instead, with the help of the media, projected the authorities as unreasonable. Thussu continues to describe how much the media exaggerated the situation in Yugoslavia. At one point, the claim was made that over 100,000 people had been executed by the Serbians. However, it was later learned that there were only 2,000 bodies found.

The reason for this misrepresentation and sometimes falsification was because the intervention was part of a larger plan. Thussu observes that "the construction of Camp Bondsteel, 'the largest U.S. base built since the Vietnam War' shows that the intervention was carefully planned and executed with a long term view of security in the region" (10). Yugoslavia was viewed as a strategic point of intervention as it lay in the crossroads of Western and Eastern Europe, and was located near the Middle East and Central Asia. This, however, was never mentioned by the media.

After taking the situation in Yugoslavia into account, Thussu explores the impact of television specifically. He notes that U.S.-dominated television has an extensive reach, especially that of CNN which is the world's most influential television news organization. "CNN reaches more than 150 million television households in over 212 countries and territories, 24 hours a day" (9). An interesting fact that illustrates the significance of CNN is that Serbia continued to broadcast CNN even though the administration openly declared it as a factory of lies. Since then, CNN has continued to expand and, as of 2000, "it was available to more than 800 million people across the globe. The group includes six cable and satellite television networks, two radio networks, eleven web sites, more than 200 international affiliates" (12). With such growth in less than 10 years, it is clear that CNN has found its niche within global political communications.

17. Jared Cohen: Google Ideas Director Fuses Technology and Statecraft

In writing "*Jared Cohen: Google Ideas Director Fuses Technology and Statecraft*", Michael Useem briefly discusses Jared Cohen's transition from being the State Department's social media guru to Google's next big innovator. In talking on this subject, Useem focuses on the steps Cohen is taking to make Google Ideas a strategic asset to the U.S. government with regard to domestic and international relations threats. He states that "Google Ideas, created in October 2010 with Cohen at the helm, is located not in the company's philanthropic arm but inside its business operations… As a signature event, Cohen gathered some 80 ex-extremists – skinheads, neo-Nazis, jihadists. Now*former* extremists, they knew something about what they spoke, and in collaboration with company employees, terrorist victims, and academic researchers (the former president of Colombia sat with former Colombian guerrillas), they brainstormed on innovative strategies to combat extremism" (1). This indicates that Cohen is turning Google into strategic institution which has unparalleled ability to gather intelligence and help the U.S. combat international and domestic extremism.

18. Voice of America in the post-Cold War era: Opportunities and challenges to external media services via new information and communication technology

This article by Sharon Wang looks at the creation and historical use of Voice of America as a public diplomacy tool during two of America's greatest international conflicts, and then analyzes how the broadcasting vehicle itself tried to evolve and ready itself for the constantly changing media environment. Before delving into the topic, Wang discusses how VOA was "established in 1942 through the Office of War Information of the U.S government as the Great War-era precursor of the U.S propaganda apparatus" (344). VOA's role as a U.S government-funded radio broadcasting service was essentially to serve as an official voice of the American government and shape conflicts and policies around the world. It is especially known for acting, first, as a "propaganda machine" during World War II, and then a soft power

tool during the Cold War in efforts to breach the Iron Curtain during a period of hostility between the two ideological camps. In fact, according to Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model, media are critical tools constrained by the dominant ideology, which, in this case, promoted anti-communism prior to and during the Cold War and attempted to mobilize support for the democratic and capitalist agenda (346). The overall goal in utilizing VOA as a strategic tool, in both cases, was to impose information and ultimately influence the target societies perception of the conflict. In other words, public diplomacy, otherwise known as the "efforts by the government of one nation to influence public or elite opinion in a second nation for the purpose of turning the foreign policy of the target nation to advantage", was heavily utilized during the Cold War as an alternative method to propaganda (345).

Wang emphasizes the idea that information via media is power, as is the ability to influence public opinion through that information. According to Lippman's communication model, to achieve political influence, one must "enlist the interest of the public, find common ground, establish credible symbols and authority, and create consent" (347). This has been the purpose of using media in soft power campaigns. However, as more media sources and vehicles enter into the propaganda machine, valuable information becomes difficult to identify amidst all the noise. In dealing with this issue, many attribute the success of the most influential media to its ability to continuously evolve and find new means of connecting. For example, as modern communication began to play a more influential role in the circulation of information, external broadcasting such as VOA started to integrate various tactics in the form of satellite and internet transmission into their public diplomacy efforts in hopes of expanding its reach and influence. This is an example of how media are never staying constant but always evolving to fit the needs of the times.

Using modern media does, however, have advantages and disadvantages. It is beneficial because it provides multiple outlets, which can be used to disseminate information and expand its sphere of influence. On the other hand, there is a higher degree of free-flow of information when it comes to modern media, which makes it somewhat unpredictable and harder to control. This idea is further

developed by Wang's argument stating that the "improvement in technology is a false indicator of evaluating the success of public diplomacy" (344). This is backed up by recent research that shows the U.S government's inability to establish a sophisticated communications strategy to capture the minds of those abroad, particularly in international hotspots like the Middle East. This is evident by the lack of successful public diplomacy efforts abroad and growing anti-Americanism, especially since 9/11. What reinforces this negativity is the fact that anti-western information is readily available on modern media sources such as the Internet. With this said, it is becoming more and more clear that Western radio broadcasters are losing their footing and will no longer be able to completely dominate the international media landscape as they once did.

Lack of control, however, is not going to stop the media evolution. If anything, political power strategies must evolve and adapt. Already, the U.S Congress has begun to make necessary steps to strengthen its soft power weapons through expansion of media services and bulking up security frameworks. Wang shows, however, that the U.S is not the only country that is making such adjustments. Both Russia, China, and even some terrorist networks, have made significant strides to modernize their communications operations to counter U.S influence with their own soft power. Many fear that modern media has become the newest battle ground for an informational Cold War. For example, in the Middle East, where having successful public diplomacy would serve the U.S needs best, American soft power is steadily declining as what we like to call "Islamist extremists" are gaining attraction. Before the information revolution, however, many in Arab countries would look to western media, such as VOA, for uncensored information and different points of view on Middle Eastern conflicts that would not be available on government controlled Arab media. Unfortunately, now that information is expanding and is no longer a scarce resource, the VOA is challenged with trying to uphold its position as a state-controlled vehicle, while trying to promote an image of credibility and objectivity, which is what attracts foreign audiences.

This is just one among many problems facing the U.S in its ability to deliver soft power successfully. Already discussed is the fact that there is a degree of steadily growing anti-Americanism which is evident by the 47-nation survey showing the declining image of the U.S to even its allies like the UK and Canada (353). One reason for this change in perception, especially amongst the allies, is because America has been known to be a hypocrite of sorts…contradicting itself by preaching democracy, but then manipulating democratic ideals in order to achieve goals in various international operations and conflicts. This has ultimately undermined the messages promoted by soft power and public diplomacy efforts. In this new Cold War, the U.S must restore its credibility and its image of a nation upheld by morals, during a time when concepts such as democracy and human rights as ideological tools are not enough to win the war. In rebuilding its global esteem, U.S public diplomacy efforts going forward will need to be determined by its ability to understand worldviews, beliefs and cultural sensitivies, and ultimately use this understanding as the basis of their communications strategy.

19. Jared Cohen starts Google Ideas

In *Jared Cohen Starts Google Ideas,* Seth Weintraub discusses Jared Cohen's transition from the U.S. State Department to Google, where he created its newest department called Google Ideas. This new division of Google is described by Jared Cohen as a "think/do tank" which is modeled off of his experience as the social media specialist for the Policy Planning staff in the State Department (1). This department will not only focus on international development and citizen empowerment, but also counterterrorism and nonproliferation of weapons. In working to conduct research, gather insights and develop foreign policy strategies, Cohen will turn Google into a collaborator. In this regard, Google Ideas will operate much like the Policy Planning sector did. It will bring together many stakeholders, including parts of the government, NGOs, media corporations and contractors to assess various international situations and come up with solution recommendations to "troubleshoot challenges" (1).

Weintraub indicated that by switching to Google, Cohen can take advantage of resources provided by the private sector. In fact, Cohen states that:

> there are things the private sector can do that the U.S. government can't do. The big thing is the resources and the capabilities. There are not a couple hundred [computer] engineers in the State Department that can build things; that's just not what government does. You don't necessarily have some of the financial resources to put behind these things. It's really hard to bring talented young people in; there are not a lot mechanisms to do it. On some topics, it's very sensitive for government to be the one doing this. (1)

20. The Role of Mobile-Enabled Social Media in Social Development

In *The Role of Mobile-Enabled Social Media in Social Development,* Masatake Yamamichi discusses the many forms of social networking, including Facebook and Twitter, among many others. She provides a detailed background on the statistical usage of these two social media forms, as well as the capabilities that have made them both unique and an asset for social development. For example, Facebook has over 750 million members, of which half use the site daily. Many features that drive users to this site are the ability to create individual profiles, post messages, upload videos and photos, chat and share events. Twitter, on the other hand, has over 200 million registered users and an average of 140 million tweets are sent everyday (4).

Both Facebook and Twitter have continued to grow, in large part, because of the ability to access these sites on mobile devices. Yamamichi indicates that the combination of mobile devices and social media sites create a platform in which grassroots activism can accelerate and mobilize. The ability to mobilize is due, in large part, to the geographical flexibility that results from the use of mobile phones, as well as the intimacy and interconnectivity provided by the social media sites.

GLOBAL IMAGE OF U.S. TODAY

A German editor, Josef Joffe, once argued that U.S. soft power was more powerful and valuable than its economic and military assets. He states "U.S. culture, low-brow or high, radiates outward with an intensity last seen in the days of the Roman Empire—but with a novel twist. Rome's and Soviet Russia's cultural sway stopped exactly at their military borders. America's soft power, though, rules over an empire on which the sun never sets" (Nye, 96). While this might have been true for much of American history, in recent years, however, the global perception of the U.S. has changed.

There is a degree of steadily growing anti-Americanism that is evident by the fact that favorable attitudes toward the U.S. in the Middle East are lower now than they were during George W. Bush's presidency. It is also made evident by the 47-nation survey showing the declining image of the U.S. even among its allies like Great Britain and Canada (Wang, 353). One reason for this change in perception, especially among the allies, is because the idealistic image of U.S. positive influence has been tainted by the implementation of policies that are considered illegitimate by much of the international public. An example of this was the decision in 2003 to enter into the "War on Terror" to destroy weapons of mass destruction (WMD) when, in fact, none were ever found. When it came to the decision to bypass all other options and invade Iraq, it soon became publicly recognized that it was a huge mistake. In an interview with Ben Barber, a senior writer at USAID, he concludes that "it's gonna take a little while for people in the U.S. and the Middle East to get over that one". Unfortunately, because of scenarios like this, the U.S. has become known as a hypocrite of sorts…contradicting itself by preaching democracy, but then manipulating democratic ideals in order to justify interventions and achieve foreign policy goals in various international operations and conflicts. This has ultimately undermined the image the U.S. has attempted to promote in order to position itself as

a free and fair country. A statistic that documents this increasing skepticism of U.S. intervention is seen in a BBC opinion poll, which reported that across twenty-five countries, over half of those polled said the U.S. played a mainly negative role in the world (Nye, 96).

The most basic reason for the growing resentment towards the U.S. is the decline of public diplomacy and soft power during the years following the Cold War. Instead of utilizing soft power, which, in this case, is the act of convincing others to want and advocate for beneficial outcomes to the U.S., the U.S. administration felt overly confident in this newfound role of super power and opted to coerce, rather than co-opt foreign populations. (Nye, 95). After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the decline of communism, the U.S. government discarded soft power and public diplomacy as a Cold War relic that was no longer relevant or necessary in global relations. Even after September 11th, 2001 (9/11), the situation improved minimally, with little increase in Congressional support and government funding for public diplomacy programs. Federal initiatives ultimately resulted in humanitarian and military interventions and foreign policy decisions that were executed without soft power and diplomatic support as a precursor. As a result of taking action without informing the global community or fostering a sense of global understanding for these actions, U.S. policies have often been misunderstood and despised in various parts of the world. Because of this decline in public diplomacy, the U.S. was not able to engage effectively with influential stakeholders, including expanding youth populations and extremist groups around the world. As a result, poll after poll highlights an increasingly negative view of U.S. activities and reputation abroad (O'Sullivan, 1).

The U.S. government's inability to establish a sophisticated communications strategy to capture the hearts and minds of those abroad has been particularly evident since 9/11. This is especially noticeable in international hotspots like the Middle East, where there has been a lack

of successful public diplomacy efforts and a resulting increase in anti-Americanism. What reinforces this negativity is also the fact that many anti-American and anti-Western groups are beating the U.S. at its own game, meaning that they are implementing their own soft power and transmitting relevant and emotive anti-Western information, which is readily available on modern media vehicles such as the Internet.

With this said, in this new day and age when the U.S. is in the beginning of a Cold War with China and struggling to maintain a presence in the Middle East, the U.S. must restore its credibility and its image as a nation upheld by morals. Furthermore, the U.S. must undertake this mission during a time when ideological concepts such as democracy and human rights are not enough to win wars anymore. In rebuilding its global reputation, U.S. public diplomacy efforts going forward will need to demonstrate an understanding of world views, beliefs and cultural sensitivities, and ultimately use this understanding as the basis of its strategic communications strategy.

RESURGENCE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND SOFT POWER

After years of provoking a feeling of resentment in international communities, the U.S. government gradually came to the realization that it must take action to regain its stature and protect its ability to be influential on a global scale. After the terrorist attacks on 9/11, the U.S. began to rediscover the importance of investing in global reputation-building. Since that time, the U.S. government has begun a gradual process of broadening its focus beyond hard power to include an expansion of public diplomacy and soft power initiatives. Changes in administration have allowed for more emphasis on these tactics in recent years.

The U.S. administration has now re-employed the ideas of soft power and public diplomacy as part of its strategic approach to foster international support for the implementation

of its foreign policies. In fact, soft power and public diplomacy have been recognized as the most important persuasive tools, especially when targeting nations that have recently overcome oppressive regimes. Opposed to focusing on countries like Iran and China, which harbor negative feelings toward the U.S. and make attempts to prohibit media imports and exports, the U.S. has begun to focus soft power efforts on generating public opinion in newly emancipated countries like Egypt which has a large, tech-savvy, accessible, and progressive youth population. By focusing on countries that are in transition like Egypt, the U.S. government can take advantage of the lack of clear leadership and the desire for change to create an ally. This is particularly beneficial to the U.S. as creating alliances with citizens of repressive regimes may provide access to largely impenetrable regions that have been skeptical and resentful towards Western ideals and "America's attitude of exceptionalism" (Barber). The strategy behind this tactic is based on the premise that:

> shaping public opinion becomes even more important where authoritarian governments have been replaced. But even when the foreign leaders are friendly, their leeway to support U.S. foreign policies may be limited if their publics and parliaments have a negative image of the U.S. (Nye, 99).

In circumstances like this, attracting the attention and the interest of the public through soft power and diplomacy efforts can become as crucial to the success of foreign policy as traditional diplomatic communications among leaders. It appears to be even more effective than hard power tactics in the long run because this awareness of people and public opinion opens channels of communication that may not have existed before. Unlike the utilization of hard power where the U.S. goes to war with or intimidates a direct threat, the application of soft power and public

diplomacy instead attracts and works with these citizens to help them understand U.S. motives and agendas, thereby countering the notion of "American exceptionalism".

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND SOFT POWER TODAY

In the achievement or maintenance of power, which is the ability to influence others in order to attain desired outcomes, nations typically choose between several strategic methods commonly used in international relations. According to Joseph Nye, these include coercion, incentives and attraction (94). Coercion, also known as hard power, has been the preferred method of attaining power for much of America's history. It is typically accomplished through force and threats of force, and can include things like trade sanctions and military interventions, which tend to cause negative consequences. It is for this reason that hard power is generally used as a last resort, because of the cost, the potential for loss of human treasure, and the ease with which it creates enemies. This is validated by Barber in his statement that **use** of hard power "has really created a lot of enemies and created a lot of damage." Incentives, on the other hand, which are not as undiplomatic as hard power, are a fairly common and preferred method of gaining power. Although, because incentives require the use of bribery in the form of foreign aid, humanitarian assistance, and trade opportunities, they are not always embraced wholeheartedly by a nation's public. Lastly, attraction encompasses the idea of convincing one to emulate, admire and aspire to certain lifestyles and ideals, therefore placing greater importance on the public's mindset (Nye, 94). This method was successfully implemented to win the hearts and minds of Soviets during the Cold War, and is now slowly gaining momentum as the most well-reasoned approach in today's society. Barber supports the importance of this tactic in U.S. foreign policy when he suggests that "we should pull back and use aid, cultural exchanges and information…as much public information as you can get out there." Given the power of public

opinion today, soft power and public diplomacy have become a crucial pair of tactics in attracting support for U.S. international policies and the expansion of the U.S. sphere of influence.

Although soft power and public diplomacy tend to be recognized as partners, there is a significant distinction between the two, which is important to recognize. The difference lies in the degree that power is measured in behavioral outcomes as opposed to resources. Typically, the persuasive ability of public diplomacy is achieved through resources such as media, cultural exchanges, NGOs, diplomats and embassies, subsidizing cultural exports, and so forth. Public diplomacy, specifically, "is an instrument that governments use to mobilize these resources to communicate with and attract the publics of other countries, rather than merely their governments" (Nye, 95). But what can arise from the successful implementation of these tactics is soft power, demonstrated in the form of values expressed in culture, internal practices and policies, and how one relates to others as a form of attraction. Although it seems that soft power is a by-product of public diplomacy and the resources used to implement it, because the two concepts parallel one another, the long-term process of diplomacy is also made possible by the acceptance and understanding created by soft power. Therefore, the success or failure of America's ability to influence public opinion and attract the interest of foreign populations rests in its ability to use public diplomacy and soft power effectively together.

When it comes to developing the attractiveness of a nation and building diplomatic relations, it is typical for a country to implement a variety of programs in the form of broadcasting, cultural exchanges and humanitarian assistance, as was already explained. The effect and range of influence of these programs, however, can vary. Once programs such as these are in place, they can then either affect the foreign policy in another nation directly or indirectly

depending on whom within the target nation is impacted. For example, if the leaders or elite of a nation become attracted and persuaded to adopt a certain outlook, that would be considered direct influence. If the broader public or media is influenced, however, it is considered indirect influence, as well as a ground up approach, which will create an empowered environment that can often persuade the elites and leaders to make certain foreign policy decisions (Nye, 94).

The indirect approach has gained momentum in foreign policy strategies of late, as targeting public opinion, an integral aspect of leveraging soft power and public diplomacy, is increasingly becoming a tactic of cultural and political influence. One cause for this development is the mass expansion of democratic countries and U.S. democratic standards since the end of the Cold War (Mor, 161). Due to this ideological expansion, and the fact that it is founded on the idea of a representative government selected for and by the public, it is crucial that all citizens are able to acquire knowledge and information, voice their opinions, and influence the course of public policy, as well as the actions of the state. This being said, equal opportunity to voice public opinion is becoming more and more a global standard in democratic nations, and a desired right in those that are not. As a result, the power that people hold through public opinion is becoming globally recognized as an increasingly critical factor in international relations and the key to the success of U.S. foreign policy.

The logic behind targeting public opinion as a means of influencing foreign policy is as simple as natural psychology. We, as humans, tend to like those who are more similar to us than they are different, whether this is through physical characteristics or shared attitudes (Nye, 92). Although U.S. values are by no means universal, there are similar values, such as increased participation and freedom of expression, that are becoming increasingly important in the digital and information age. In Jared Cohen's book, Children of Jihad, he stresses that there are "a

common set of norms and values characteristic of young people around the world regardless of religion, nationality, or ethnicity…they are in a state of 'reachable-ness' and want to feel as though they belong, can have a purpose in this world, and can have a better life" (Seismic Shift, 69). These wants, needs and values will ultimately provide the foundation for soft power and the ability to create connections and shared opinions. However, as the power dynamics of this generation continue to evolve, successful soft power will depend on two-way relationships, meaning that the U.S. will also have to live up to the values shared by target audiences if they want to remain attractive and legitimate.

The key to maintaining two-way relationships and attraction between nations in this interconnected and globalized world is through credible communication. With a heightened sense of anti-American feelings brewing around the world, the effectiveness of U.S. soft power will depend upon reliability, moral integrity and satisfying civic opinions surrounding government decisions and actions. When this does not occur and public opinion is ignored, as we have seen in the Post-Cold war era, the U.S. is seen as manipulative or as propagandists, destroying any legitimacy and with it any potential influence. It is for this reason that soft power's ability to "pull," rather than "push," is crucial going forward (Nye, 83).

IMPORTANCE OF U.S. MEDIA IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND SOFT POWER

Reaching out and connecting with the international community through the strategic use of media, particularly in the form of radio, television and social media, can be a successful method of pulling people in and building interest around national values and foreign policies. Because there are often barriers which prevent one nation from directly soliciting the citizens of sovereign nations, these mediums provide an ideal platform that can more easily access and

attract foreign target audiences. Media can overcome distance, territorial borders, and with help from those who are globally aware and culturally conscious, help to bridge ethnic and cultural barriers. When media messages have this reach and convey thoughtfulness and understanding of those being targeted abroad, the global community has proven to be more responsive to the messages being broadcasted.

Because the U.S. media industry is a globally renowned powerhouse in the world of communications, the U.S. administration has access to a great source of influence and power in its various international communication mediums. Several factors work towards America's benefit in this regard. For one, many nations that are of strategic political interest to the U.S. are oppressive in some ideological fashion and lack many of the freedoms that are standard in a democracy. In nations such as this, governments typically control and monitor the media content, making the information provided by U.S. more desirable to the public, as it is considered more objective and offers opinions and information that are not accessible in that nation. Because many individuals who live in societies like this admire democratic values, such as freedom of speech and opinion, opportunity is created for the U.S. to insert its foreign policy agendas into media content, in hopes that the content will be well-received and internalized by the foreign population. In addition, because U.S. media vehicles are so globally pervasive and have a reputation of being more objective than other nations, many other global media sources incorporate the messages transmitted from the U.S. into their own content. This only further promotes U.S. topics of interest and foreign policy agendas which are strategically communicated and framed in the content.

While the U.S. government extends to the people of many oppressive regimes through various forms of media, it also connects with audiences in nations that have a more democratic style of

governance or are more open to democratic values. The fact that almost half the nations in the world are democracies helps to facilitate the ease of communication between the U.S. and these nations. The open and inclusive nature of a democracy provides the ideal environment in which to aim U.S. media and public diplomacy efforts. This is because one of the key characteristics of a democracy, the importance of public opinion, is just as vital in eliciting influence as official government to government interactions have been in the past (Nye, 99).

Another reason why media exert such influence in public diplomacy and soft power is because their control is no longer limited to governments. Because of technology's ability to make communication and information sharing that much easier, many non-state actors have the ability to publish information, thereby accessing the potential power media contains. As a result, everywhere we turn, we are constantly inundated by messages from a plethora of media vehicles, all making various claims and taking various positions. We are finding that because of this phenomenon, there is now a constant eruption of information creating "paradox of plenty", which will ultimately lead to a scarcity of attention rather than information (Nye, 103). As a result, successful policy-making during a time like this has become less about whose military or economy wins and more about who can create the most credible and inviting story to attract the biggest audience. In such an environment, the U.S. is starting to realize that in order to compete with other nations, international groups and organizations, they need to enhance their own credibility and weaken that of their opponents. This is where media resources come into play.

When looking at western democracies, mass media, governments and public diplomacy, it is clear that they share a very close affiliation and interdependent relationship. Central to this relationship is the ability to use influential media vehicles to promote foreign policy. In speaking about this relationship, Daya Thussu makes the case that "information is power in the foreign

policy sense…and one may grant the necessity for governments to manipulate it on occasion as they would other instruments of national power" (356). When being used in this regard, media vehicles play a significant role in determining what information is socially relevant and important enough to inform the public. This is an impressive trait to possess during a time and place where being able to influence public opinion creates a powerful strategic advantage. In fact:

> in 2000, Ira Magaziner, President Clinton's 'Internet czar' briefed State Department officials on the need for the United States to become more engaged in utilizing media for public diplomacy. At this time, as the Internet was quickly becoming more deeply integrated into everyday life, he argued that the average person could now be linked to near-unlimited amounts of information, necessitating greater openness and engagement on the part of government. (Dale, 3)

This zeal for advancing the capability of U.S. public diplomacy was echoed by Senator George Allen in 2001 when he referred to the Internet as "'a modern day version of Gutenberg's printing press,' advocating its use to 'disperse our ideas,' spreading democratic ideals within previously inaccessible societies worldwide, '[hopefully] leading to greater liberties'" (Dale, 3).

The state of global relations today is indicative of a new international norm, one that has been impacted by the communications revolution and the expansion of democratic values. This new norm consists of using communications to fight over the hearts and minds of global civilians in order to justify policies, actions or political agendas. Media has become the most effective channel of influence in this regard. The information and images portrayed within media content,

and the distance that they travel, hold an inexplicable amount of weight as they greatly influence how nations and their actions are internationally perceived. The perception portrayed in U.S media content is ultimately intended to persuade foreign publics, foreign media, and foreign elites that the values and policies of the U.S. are incontrovertible and that its actions, therefore, deserve their support. Mor addresses this notion in stating that "a government's process of communicating with foreign publics is an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies" (160). This indicates that media is an essential tool for U.S. impression management and foreign policy implementation.

U.S. GOVERNMENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH MEDIA

The power of U.S. media is undeniable. Internationally and even domestically broadcasted content has the ability to inform audiences, frame content and persuade people to take sides or take action. The power of the most influential and persuasive media vehicles, such as VOA, CNN and Facebook, stems from the fact that they are not only incredibly relied upon in the U.S., but also in a large percentage of the world. This ultimately gives the U.S. administration an indirect and covertly influential channel into many nations that it could not access independently without the help of media.

In an ideal world, the U.S. government would directly control and monitor the media content going into some of these nations, especially those which are of national security or economic interest to the U.S. Knowledge generated from information is power in this regard, and it would serve the U.S. government well to control the content foreign populations are receiving. However, due to today's interconnected society and the advent of the information age, official media of any government are becoming much less influential and seen as less credible. It is for

this reason that today, unlike in the past where government controlled media vehicles were the primary foreign policy tool, that commercial and independent media vehicles unaffiliated with the government are making their mark in strategic international communications. It is important to note, however, that just because a media vehicle is not directly linked to the U.S. government, that does not mean the media content is not influenced by the government or its foreign policies.

The discussion of U.S. government influence on U.S. media content is controversial and would benefit from future research. While it is very true that the government does not control all media vehicles within the U.S., a new strategic communication model is emerging in this information age which necessitates a greater relationship and dependency between the two forces. This is not to say that there is a media conspiracy in full effect or that non-government controlled media vehicles are intentionally letting the U.S. government impact their media content, but rather that there is a varying degree of influence between the two forces. The influence may occur in the form of media sources turning to the U.S. government for information and facts not yet available or discussed publicly. It may also occur when a media source takes a stance on a topic which supports the U.S. foreign policy, possibly in hopes that it may be given unprecedented access to cover the story. When acting as a mouthpiece for the U.S. government on certain topics, especially those of interest to national security, the media source may be provided with unparalleled reach into forbidden territories and provide a source of intelligence. Its role may transform and become a platform through which the U.S. government can communicate with other governments and their people, in hopes of promoting their stance and understanding of the conflict. Both the government and major media vehicles can benefit from this relationship and expand both of their global spheres of influence, albeit intended or unintended. Regardless, the use of non-government and government media sources have elevated

soft power and public diplomacy tactics to become increasingly multi-dimensional in their ability to target audiences and involve them in international relations.

CONSIDERATIONS IN STRATEGIC MEDIA USAGE

The use of U.S. media vehicles, which have incredible strength in reaching large masses of people and reinforcing public awareness on certain topics, provides a great advantage as a strategic soft power and public diplomacy tool. Unfortunately, a frequent challenge for this communications strategy is that there is little control in how media messages are perceived in different cultural settings. In order for these messages to be successful and have a positive impact among foreign populations, the U.S. administration must gain a better understanding of its audiences and hold their values in high regard. Ben Barber states that:

> a lot of our failures in public diplomacy are because we don't put
>
> ourselves in the shoes of the other people. We just imagine all these
>
> poor people…all these poor countries and think all they want to do is
>
> become like Americans. And that's just not true. Obviously they want
>
> to have a decent hospital to take their kids to, and have enough food,
>
> and to live in security, but they don't want to give up their culture.

If the U.S. can develop a better understanding about its targeted foreign populations and what they want, its soft power will become more effective in creating influential and culturally relevant messages.

Creating culturally sensitive messaging has become especially important in more recent times, with the monopolization of information and information-based power becoming a thing of the past. As more global players are competing for the attention of public opinion, it is now becoming evident that the U.S. government cannot achieve all of its foreign policy agendas while acting alone without global support. Joseph Nye concurs with this thought in saying that in this increasingly

globalized world, "power becomes a positive-sum game and it is not enough to think in terms of power *over* others. To be successful, we must also think in terms of power *to* accomplish goals that involves power *with* others" (xvii).

With that said, the networking and connectedness provided by media, particularly social media, have become two of the most important sources of American soft power today. Much of this is because the increase in networking provides a level of intimacy and understanding that supports the U.S. strategy to empower and engage the global community. In fact, Mor says, "it is crucial to understand the target audience. By definition soft power means getting others to want the same outcomes you want, and that requires an understanding of how they are hearing your messages and adapting them accordingly" (160). Therefore in order for U.S. public diplomacy to achieve success and have a positive impact among today's foreign and interconnected populations, the government must strategically reinforce U.S. media content and support the adaptation of messages in order to create potential alliances with the people. In building these relationships, it is critical to gain a better understanding of and respect for the public's wants and needs, and find ways to strike an emotional chord.

EVOLUTION OF MEDIA IN FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY

If transmitting information to targeted audiences via media is power, then so is the ability to influence public opinion through that information. According to Lippman's communication model, to achieve political influence, one must "enlist the interest of the public, find common ground, establish credible symbols and authority, and create consent" (Wang, 347). Historically, this has been the purpose of using various kinds of media in soft power campaigns. However, as more media sources and vehicles have entered into the propaganda machine throughout the past decades, valuable information has become increasingly difficult to identify amidst the proliferation of clutter and

noise. In dealing with this issue, many attribute the success of influential media vehicles to their ability to continuously evolve and find new means of connecting and attracting attention.

Before analyzing the successful impact and future use of social media, it is important to review how more traditional media vehicles such as radio and television evolved to become soft power and democracy promotion tools. For example, as technology began to play a more influential role in the circulation of information, external broadcasting such as VOA started to integrate various tactics in the form of satellite and internet transmission into their public diplomacy efforts in hopes of expanding its reach and influence. This is an example of how effective media never stays constant but always evolves to fit the needs of the times.

RADIO

Radio has been used as a method of domestic communication since the early 1900's. Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model insists that communication mediums such as radio are critical tools heavily utilized to emphasize dominant ideologies. In applying this model to the Cold War, the U.S. used radio to promote an ideology of anti-communism and breach the Iron Curtain in order to mobilize support for the democratic and capitalist agenda (Wang, 346). It wasn't until after World War II (WWII), however, that radio vehicles Radio Free Europe (RFE), Radio Liberty (RL) and Voice of America (VOA) were strategically applied as soft power weapons in the European theater. It was at this at this point, after the war, that tensions between the U.S. and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) became so volatile that many nations were preparing for an ideological jihad in the form of a third world war. Much of the tension between the U.S. and the USSR stemmed from the fact that the two nations had contradicting political ideologies and were both on a mission to absorb as much power and international support as possible. Although the USSR was already on its way to building a

communist empire that would encompass all of Eastern Europe, the U.S. opposition reached its pinnacle when the North Koreans, trained by and allied with the communist Soviets, invaded South Korea, a capitalist nation supported by the U.S. (Henze, 5).

It was because of this discord that the concept of using radio as a form of soft power and public diplomacy came to fruition. Following its creation, President Truman planned to utilize RFE as a means for exiled Eastern European political leaders to communicate with those who still existed behind the communist curtain (Henze, 5). It was envisioned as a tool to inspire hope and deter the spread of Soviet influence. However, when the North Koreans and Soviets attacked the South Koreans, this marked the first armed conflict of the Cold War and provided the ammunition the U.S. needed to defend democracy and capitalism. As a result, any doubt about how to use the station was quickly eliminated and it was decided that the RFE would be put to use purposely to combat communism, as radio was the only medium that had the ability to penetrate the Soviet block (Henze, 6).

The fact that RFE was a decentralized operation enabled a level of influence behind the Iron Curtain that was not available through any other communications medium. While the RFE headquarters was located in Washington D.C., multiple Soviet states controlled their own national broadcasting services. These included Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania, all of which directed their own RFE operations and were, therefore, able to enjoy a degree of autonomy. This particular arrangement helped each national service relate to its own audience, which, in turn, built stronger connections and added a degree of authenticity to the broadcasts. The Soviet listeners were not unsuspecting, however, as many had been conditioned to be suspicious while living under the Soviet establishment. Over time, and after proving itself

to be an accurate and practical service, RFE was able to overcome such reservations and acquire credibility as a source of valuable information.

The U.S. agenda for the RFE channel was to compete with other USSR stations by broadcasting on all topics of interest to the Soviet natives, including, but not limited to, news, religion, sports, culture and entertainment. RFE avoided any talk of liberation from the regime or sermon-like speeches inciting listeners to take arms against the Soviet military. Boundaries such as these contributed to the success of RFE broadcasts by helping to establish the integrity of the content (Henze, 6). Integrity was critical because it was not the Soviet citizens who were interested in what the American radio had to say, but it was the RFE that was interested in building a dedicated Soviet audience. The U.S. recognized this, and made it a point to understand that this target audience had very real and urgent problems at their front door. Therefore, they wanted to provide a haven of sorts when in the protection of their own home. In doing this, the local stations personalized their broadcasts with terms such as "we" and "us" which established a connection with the audience (Henze, 9). They essentially tried to "serve the peoples of Eastern Europe by keeping them company, upholding their dignity, bolstering their confidence, strengthening their 'European-ness' and their historic ties to America, while giving them hope that 'this too would pass'" (Henze, 7).

It was not until 1959, nearly ten years after the debut of RFE that Radio Liberation became what we now know as Radio Liberty. The idea behind this broadcast service, instead of focusing on strengthening Eastern European pride, was to provide a channel of free speech so that fellow Eastern Europeans in America could voice their pro-American opinions. By incorporating the U.S. standard of "freedom" into its program, the overall objective of RL was to

provide a source of information that would promote Eastern Europeans' democratic rights. In a democracy, these rights would include:

> their right to have the freedom of choice for Soviet nationalities,
> the freedom of conscience and religion, the ability to eliminate the
> system of terror and forced labor, the ability to end Party control of
> the arts and sciences, and finally the end of aggressive Soviet
> foreign policy by the overthrow of the regime. (Henze, 7)

The hope for this broadcast service was to make those living within the confines of communist Europe feel as if the U.S. recognized and respected them, their culture, their language and, ultimately, their separate existence from the USSR.

The RL was unfortunately also known for venting its hatred of the communist regime, which negatively impacted the credibility and objectivity of the station. Under radio broadcasting pioneer Boris Shub, however, this negative approach was eliminated for fear that such blatant propaganda would repel listeners. In order to better relate to the Soviet's general public and ultimately attract them, Shub felt that RL needed to better understand and appreciate the vulnerability of the typical Soviet listener, who, chances were, was very proud of his country and his identity. As a result, all RL broadcasting was geared towards being honest, relating to the daily struggles, and hoping for a better future. In accomplishing this, RL set up monitoring posts so they could examine broadcasts from all across the USSR, including local stations that did not have the ability to broadcast nationally. This helped RL gain some legitimacy among the public as the station filled a rather large news and information void. Another tactic that enhanced RL's credibility was the illegal airing of Soviet-censored information such as Khrushchev's secret speech condemning Stalin's crimes, as well as censored novels by famous Russian and American

authors (Henze, 8). These examples of defiant broadcasting and freedom of speech were inspiring to Soviet listeners and broadened their view of world events beyond what the Soviet government had deemed appropriate for them to know.

Although different than RL and RFE, the Voice of America was also a successful soft power tool used by the U.S. during the Cold War. It was initially established in 1942 by the U.S. government's Office of War Information as an early forerunner of U.S. propaganda. It was especially known for acting, first, as a "propaganda machine" during World War II, and then later as a soft power tool during the Cold War. But unlike the indirect approach of RL and RFE, VOA's role as a government-funded radio broadcasting service was essentially to serve as the official voice of the U.S. government and, therefore, offer opinions on various conflicts and policies around the world.

The overall goal in utilizing VOA as a strategic tool in both WWII and the Cold War was to distribute information in order to ultimately influence the target society's perception of the conflicts. This was the U.S. government's early venture into the realm of soft power and public diplomacy, otherwise known as the "efforts by the government of one nation to influence public or elite opinion in a second nation for the purpose of turning the foreign policy of the target nation to advantage" (Wang, 345). A technique that was often utilized in this regard was broadcasting messages from Soviet refugees, many of whom were cultural icons, who spoke of their experiences while living in the U.S., oftentimes criticizing the negative image of America that was painted by Soviet propaganda. This type of public diplomacy was heavily utilized during the Cold War as an alternative method to propaganda.

The ideological competition between the U.S. and the USSR, which was waged through the use of media and technology during the Cold War period, was essentially "a war of ideas in

which the victor would be the side that successfully implanted its vision in the 'other's' populace" (Henze, 10). With this said, it is clear that the purpose of radio was to implement soft power and ultimately win the hearts and minds of the Soviet citizens. RL, RFE and VOA were able to accomplish this by employing several tactics to make themselves appealing and their information attractive. This primarily consisted of broadcasting news that was of personal interest to the public and that was unavailable in the censored media sources controlled by the Soviet government. Broadcasting important news quickly was also well received especially since many of the Soviet controlled stations were slow to report any relevant news that wasn't in their favor. The most important tactic, however, was the fact that U.S.-controlled stations offered a plethora of different opinions on important issues, which was never the case with Soviet stations. By the end of the Cold War, the success of radio was demonstrated by the fact that VOA alone increased the number of broadcast languages from twenty-five to forty-five during the span of the war. It also reached "25 million Soviet listeners on an average day and over 50 million in the course of an average week" (Henze, 17).

Another factor that contributed to radio's success in the Cold War was the fact that U.S. broadcasting services recognized early on that soft power did not produce the same fast paced results as hard power. The stations were, as a result, very patient in their public diplomacy efforts. They understood that, unlike hard forms of intervention such as coup d'etats or military actions that have the ability to cause immediate changes in foreign behavior, radio broadcasting needed patient, long-term application. It takes many years, even generations, to succeed in influencing public opinion. Michael Bronner, a journalist, screenwriter and producer for 60 Minutes, contributes to this thought in an interview by saying that "soft power is a long term process...if you look at the use of Voice of America during the Cold War...it was a slow process

slowly shaping ideas and bringing people access to things they wouldn't normally have." The American-led stations understood this and spent their time wisely, trying to build a sense of trust as well as playing the role of background noise that would slowly permeate society and, over the years, eventually lead to change (Henze, 36).

America's use of RL, RFE and VOA in its public diplomacy and soft power campaigns was instrumental in winning the hearts and minds of those living in the USSR. By presenting democratic information and ideas to Soviet natives, these broadcasts provided an alternative to communist propaganda. Barber takes this one step further when he said that "the use of media in warfare…it becomes an instrument of war. Even though you're aiming to protect people and get people out of the way of trouble, you're also going to try and undermine the spirit of the enemy." This was the true value of radio during the Cold War. Brick by brick and layer-by-layer, radio broadcasting was able to weaken its communist opponent and tear down the Soviet wall. By working from the bottom up and gaining the trust of listeners all over the world, an admirable perception of America was created that still exists today. Because of the broadcasts during the Cold War, it is globally acknowledged that the U.S. stands for democracy, individual rights, and a free market. These values have created a global standard and transcended the years as an ideology the U.S. hopes will be adopted by other nations and their communities.

<u>TELEVISION</u>

While radio continued to be used as the primary source of international communication for many years, television, with its visual appeal, gradually began to capture the interest of audiences and attain higher levels of viewership. The advent of satellite technology, decades later, subsequently enabled television to expand its range of communication, allowing news services to broadcast over a wider international territory. Today, U.S.-dominated global television news is a resource for

spreading soft power and implementing public diplomacy, as well as for positioning stories in such a way as to favor the U.S. political agenda. This potential is highlighted in Nye's statement where he says, "'America's increasing ability to [broadcast television]...to the public in foreign countries literally over the heads of their rulers via satellite, provides a great opportunity [for the U.S.] to foster democracy'" (Robison, 5).

One of the most significant television vehicles responsible for informing global communities and framing international headlines today is the Cable News Network (CNN) Group, the largest and most profitable 24-hour international news and information corporation in the world reaching more than 800 million people and 150 million households in 212 countries (Thussu, 349). It has continued to adapt and thrive during years of great change and technological advancements in the communications industry, and currently consists of "six satellite and cable networks, two radio networks, 11 websites, and over 200 international affiliates" (Thussu, 349). During its thirty-year existence, it is clear that CNN has found its niche as a world leader in global political communications.

CNN did not, however, always have this level of prestige. It was initially created by Ted Turner in 1980, yet it was not until the 1990's that CNN established the groundbreaking idea of broadcasting live coverage of international crises. In fact, the first time CNN received international recognition was during the Gulf War when its reports on the U.S. bombing of the Iraqi capital were shown in real-time, making it the first live war seen on television. It was following these reports that television became the principal source of news, as well as a source of military and political intelligence. The presence and popularization of CNN was also facilitated by satellite technology. It was, in fact, the first to take advantage of this technology using Intelsat, Intersputnit, PanAmSat and several regional signals, ultimately making it an international news phenomenon (Thussu, 355). With such a reputation, CNN grew to be the symbol of new and advanced media and gradually became recognized as a soft power tool capable of molding international public opinion. According to

Thussu, "it even contributed to influencing the actions of people involved in the events it was covering" (355).

The use of CNN to report highly visual and real time images of the Gulf War, Tiananmen Square and the humanitarian crisis in Somalia indicated that a significant change was occurring in conflict reporting. Because of the growing dependence on its graphic and emotive reporting style, which stimulated a public outcry and support for government intervention, CNN gained further recognition as a soft power tool to frame stories and promote the international acceptance of foreign policy agendas. Through this highly stimulating form of communication, CNN created a new form of TV-inspired media diplomacy. After seeing the potential of this television vehicle, CNN media moguls formed alliances with political forces, who, in return, deemed the 21st century to be the age of CNN (Price, 60). Thus was born what many people call the CNN Effect, in which wartime news supports and backs U.S. foreign policy agendas.

A modern day example of the CNN effect can be seen in the 2003 invasion of Iraq where the administration used media platforms to gain international support for the war. In reporting on this conflict, the global perception of U.S. military intervention was, to a large extent, framed and justified by the images supplied by CNN. CNN offered very little criticism leading up to the invasion, specifically in 2003 when the administration was using all of its power and influence to spread the belief that Iraq posed a credible WMD threat. The U.S. encouragement of this position was designed to gain public support for its decision to use hard power tactics in order to locate these weapons and ultimately insert itself in one of the Middle East's most radical nations. The coverage of this conflict indicates that even the most influential U.S. media sources rarely criticize U.S. when it is firmly decided on wartime decisions and military interventions. In fact, in many cases, the mainstream media corporations have let the government set the terms of military and foreign policy coverage in the news (Thussu, 356).

Although CNN is an international news source, only the conflicts or crises that have strategic interest to the U.S. seem to appear on CNN. Only the regions or international hotspots that are of geopolitical or economic interest are covered, and only stories which are favorable to the U.S. are given prominence. Given the global reach and influence of CNN and the dependence of international news sources on U.S.-supplied footage, the dominant perspectives broadcasted by CNN are often emulated around the world. This makes CNN an ideal tool to mold public opinion in support of U.S. policies.

When looking at the effect of CNN during the post-Cold War era, the coverage of the 1998 Kosovo conflict was one the most extensively covered catastrophes with over 70 journalists from the network. It is yet another example of how the U.S. government influenced media reporting to gain international support for its intervention into the conflict. CNN initially framed the conflict as a decade old civil war that developed out of ethnic hatred and genocide. It reiterated the U.S. administration's position on this subject, which was that "defending human rights should override national sovereignty." In doing so, CNN created an opportunity for the U.S. to obtain international support in order to lead the western military alliance, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in the intervention of the internal affairs of a sovereign state for the first time in NATO's history (Thussu, 8). By positioning NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia as an issue of humanitarian intervention in a state run by a repressive dictatorship, CNN reinforced the agenda set by the U.S. and its western alliance. In supporting this stance, the coverage that was broadcast internationally justified U.S. and NATO actions and set the tone for global understanding of the issue. It made national sovereignty less of a priority than defending human rights and was heavily biased showing no alternative views. For example, a detail that was largely ignored was that NATO's role fundamentally changed from a defensive alliance to an offensive, peacekeeping organization. Normally, information of this magnitude would be considered newsworthy in a global context, yet it was never mentioned by CNN.

The decision to fundamentally change the nature of NATO, however, was part of a more calculated plan. According to Thussu:

> with the end of the Cold War, NATO was in danger of becoming an anachronism and the U.S., which accounts for 60% of its budget, was searching for a new role for the organization. Thus a peacekeeping and peace-enforcing role was devised for NATO, and a Rapid Reaction Force created to deal with humanitarian emergencies. This flexible and highly mobile force was to police the world's hotspots (347).

Therefore, the next logical move for the military organization, following the end of the Cold War, was to enter into the Kosovo crisis where it could evolve into an offensive and international police force. Fortunately for the U.S. and NATO, the transition into this reaction force was as seamless as possible. This was in large part is because CNN drew no attention to and expressed no concern for the legality of the bombing, much less the implications for national sovereignty, a concept which defined international relations since the end of WWII. A significant point also worth noting is that by intervening in a sovereign country that was not threatening any of the member (NATO) states, the organization was acting in violation of the 1949 charter in which it was established as a defensive-only organization whose primary concern was protecting Western democracies from the communist threat of the USSR. Interestingly enough, this international violation was never considered worthy information to be broadcasted on CNN as it would create the opportunity to question U.S. actions. Furthermore, the decision to bomb Yugoslavia was not approved by the UN Security Council, which has total authority in deciding if there is a threat to international peace (Thussu, 347).

Nonetheless, the NATO bombing was justified in CNN's coverage which presented the case that the Yugoslav government was conducting a genocide against the ethnic Albanian communities of that territory. CNN also portrayed the Yugoslav government as unwilling to participate with the

Kosovo Liberation Army in any form of peace talks. What CNN omitted, however, was that the Serbian government was willing to sign a peace treaty at Rambouillet until it learned that a secret appendix was added on the last day by the U.S. The treaty demanded that they surrender all of Yugoslavia to NATO occupation and that "NATO should enjoy free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout FRY (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) including associated airspace and territorial waters... something no sovereign state would accept" (Thussu, 348). When the Serbian government rejected the peace treaty due to this appendix, they proposed their own resolution offering sovereignty for Kosovo and a peaceful resolution to the crisis. CNN failed to report on this proposed resolution, however, as well as the fact that the U.S. rejected it the day before the NATO bombing. The fact that this resolution was passed by all parties and yet rejected by the U.S. the day prior to NATO bombing seems to indicate that the Rambouillet process was indeed flawed and heavily influenced by the U.S. The manner in which the U.S. influenced the negotiation process coupled with how CNN avoided reporting on the U.S. failure to accept a peaceful solution indicates that the administration possibly had an alternative agenda for policing the conflict. Instead of covering all aspects of the crisis, CNN publicly presented the Serbian government as unreasonable, a position much more favorable to the U.S. foreign policies.

Research shows that the reason for so much U.S. participation and media framing of this conflict was because the intervention was part of a larger plan. Following the post-Cold War era, the U.S foreign policy concerns shifted from communism to terrorism, ultimately forcing NATO to redefine their role as an offensive organization in the public sphere. Justified by its need to protect and monitor regions affecting national security following the intervention in Yugoslavia, the U.S. "constructed the Army's Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo, 'the largest U.S. base built since the Vietnam War'" (Thussu, 10). The base was built to provide NATO with a deployable and mobile Ready Reaction Force in order to better support NATO's offensive role and any future offensive missions. It also provided the U.S. with a strategic central location for its defense apparatus, which

also serves as world's largest exporter of defense equipment and munitions. This was a critical move because Yugoslavia was viewed as a strategic point of interest due to the fact that it lay in the crossroads of Western and Eastern Europe and was located near the Middle East and Central Asia. The base served as an ideal expansion to the already impressive U.S. military empire which consisted of 61 bases spread across 19 countries (Thussu, 15). This shows that the intervention was carefully planned and executed with a long-term view of security in the region. This, however, was never mentioned by CNN.

In examining the Kosovo crisis, CNN's ability to frame the conflict and encourage perceptions in favor of the U.S. agenda is characterized by several trends. First, CNN was uncritical in reporting NATO's actions. It failed to acknowledge the change in NATO's role, the legality of the bombing on Yugoslavia, and its impact on national sovereignty. Second, when covering the crisis, most of the reports and interviews were from U.S. military commanders, NATO spokespersons and U.S. experts, giving limited time to Yugoslav and Serbian leaders to express their views. This coverage ultimately provided no objectivity. Third, in oversimplifying the international coverage, CNN utilized a good versus evil theme and demonized the Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic. They portrayed him as a brutal dictator who they often compared to Saddam Hussein. This ultimately helped to present the bombing as a moral crusade. Another interesting point is that the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which was portrayed as a terrorist organization and international drug smugglers by the U.S. government in years prior, was being promoted by CNN as a group of freedom fighters. Lastly, one of the more common trends was that CNN focused most of their attention on alleged Serbian atrocities and exaggerated the number of Albanians killed. Images of mass graves that were taken by U.S. spy satellites were shown regularly on CNN and claims were made that as many as 100,000 people had been executed by the Serbians. However, according to Thussu, "suspected massacre sites were scoured for evidence and bodies were exhumed under the supervision of prosecutors from the UN's international Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

According to ICTY's chief prosecutor, only 2100 bodies had been exhumed" (Thussu, 352). CNN's coverage of the war in Kosovo demonstrates that even international non-government media sources can be influenced by the government, directly or indirectly, in such a way as to shape foreign policy. Had all sides of the war been equally covered and had all the facts been accurately reported, the U.S. and NATO might not have had the international support and public advocacy needed to successfully transition the role of NATO, intervene in Kosovo, and construct a long term base in the region. This could have ultimately changed the direction of U.S. involvement in that region of the world.

Clearly, television dominated the global landscape for several decades following the Cold War. Yet while television news coverage was used as the primary form of expanding U.S. perceptions and sphere of influence in reporting on the major military and humanitarian conflicts around the globe, the Internet and Internet-based applications also began expanding in the 21st century. CNN continued to monopolize coverage of international affairs, but interest in and usage of the Internet and social media were providing new and different opportunities for real time reporting of events and conflicts. While television coverage would continue as a powerful presence, attention was shifting toward the use of the Internet and social media as powerful forces with unlimited potential in international communications and foreign affairs.

RISE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

While radio and television have been used for decades as tools for spreading soft power and implementing public diplomacy, social media has only recently appeared as the newest form of media that is breaking through many international and governmental boundaries. Social media differs from other traditional communications mediums in that it specializes in virtual interconnectivity, provides users with the ability to generate and share content, and is exclusively Internet-based. Radio, television and print can still be accessed through their own original

channels, but most Internet-compatible devices now also offer the ability to listen to radio, watch television and read print media online. While the Internet and Internet capabilities have steadily evolved since the early 1980's, it was the advent of Web 2.0, which emerged in the early 2000's, that gave rise to this recent phenomenon of social media. With this new social media technology, users are no longer limited to passively viewing information prepared for them. Instead, if users have access to a computer or a similar device and an Internet connection, they have instant access to an unprecedented globally interactive digital community. Through this digital platform, social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter opened the door to a radically changed world in which communicating and connecting can occur without boundaries and with limited government controls. This perhaps explains why social media has the potential to be an incredibly powerful tool for the U.S. government to use in improving international relations and facilitating foreign policy agenda setting.

Given that social media emerged after 9/11 and coincided with the gradual resurgence of interest in public diplomacy in the Middle East, governments and users alike have been intrigued by the possibilities of this new technology as a democracy promotion tool in this region. In the early days of applying the Internet's capabilities to international relations initiatives, the government originally attempted to use it for attaining developmental goals in under-developed or developing nations. In the 1990's, for example, government agencies concentrated entirely on utilizing the Internet to "increase penetration rates and improve access for marginalized communities" (Breuer, 2). But with the growth of Web 2.0, the goal of reaching these audiences was surpassed and then some.

By the late 2000's, Internet capabilities rapidly began to evolve, allowing users the ability to collaborate and interact with one another via social networking sites, eliminating any notion

that users are passive. Facebook and Twitter especially provide a platform in which users can be virtually empowered by digital communities and their all-encompassing features. They can review information posted by others, produce and distribute content themselves, provide feedback, and even edit content without being controlled. When comparing these new media capabilities to those of more traditional mediums, there are few limitations in how far or how fast social media content can be disseminated, and with fewer intermediaries. Because of this, information posted on such sites has the potential to be very influential and socially motivating, as large numbers of people have access to data and the ability to endorse it and pass it on through many social media mechanisms. Citizens now have the ability and are more empowered to interact and collaborate with one another regarding urgent issues and government actions.

The first time social media was publicly recognized as having the potential to be a multi-dimensional communications medium that could be used for soft power and public diplomacy was during the time period leading up to the Arab Spring uprising. Social media allowed activists to not only organize, but also reinforced the physical mobilization of mass protests against their governments. This ability to actively facilitate mobilization, in just days, is something that has yet to be seen from any other communications medium.

Statistics clearly depict how social media became the medium of choice during this time. Ellen Laipson, Gregory Gause, Andrew Marshall, Courtney Radsch, and Mona Yacoubian, who are all researchers at the Stimson Center, indicate that between 2005 and 2011, criticism of the Egyptian government was the most highly most discussed topic on social media sites and blogs. The fact that "Internet access during this time expanded from 13 percent to 40 percent", reaching nearly half of the Egyptian population, indicates that there was a significant amount of discontent within the Egyptian community (Laipson, Gause, Marshall, Radsch, and Yacoubian,

77). Much of this growth in social media usage had to do with the introduction of Twitter and Facebook in 2007, which have continued to grow at an exponential rate. Contributing to this rapid increase in social media usage is also the fact that the content is user-generated, which decreases the cost of global communications. This ultimately provides a convenient and inexpensive way in which anyone and everyone can join in a conversation. Instead of international communication being an expensive luxury of the government, corporations, or the elite, today communication is virtually free to anyone who has access to the Internet or a cell phone.

Mobile phones, which have "regional penetration rates surpassing 100%", were also a very important factor that fueled the use of mobile social media (Laipson et al., 69). Smartphones, the most common mobile phone today, have quickly become globally pervasive due to their mobile nature which provides geographic flexibility and allows communication from nearly any location. In addition, because smartphones have digital camera features and can substitute for small laptops, they allow real time access to social media sites where users can instantly make updates and upload photos. When this mobile phone technology is coupled with social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook, the outcome can be deadly, which was the case for the Egyptian administration. Because of this ability to instantly communicate, document, and upload pictures and videos to thousands of followers in real-time, information quickly radiated outwards to transnational activist organizations and journalists, compounding the global dissent and contributing to the regime's removal.

When specifically analyzing the effect Facebook and Twitter had on mobilizing a united front, it was discovered that the success of the two most used networking sites was dependent on qualities unique to each site. For example, of the social networks, Facebook is the most popular

and has attracted over 750 million members, half of which use the site daily. As part of its expansion, Facebook has made more than 70 languages available, clearly catering to its diverse target audience. Its many features include the ability to create an individual profile with personal information, post messages, upload and share photos, chat, and create events which can be shared. All of these features can also be accessed through mobile phones and tablets, which is currently done by more than 250 million users making them twice as active (Yamamichi, 4). Overall, there are two main reasons why Facebook has become such a phenomenon among the youth. One reason is because it is a platform that is very high in media richness, meaning that it has the capacity to transmit a large amount of information at any given time. It also scored very highly in self-disclosure, which means that people willingly provide personal information to make their profile a better representation of their personality, or at least how they want to portray themselves (Breuer, 2).

Aside from these characteristics of Facebook, there are many other elements that make this platform user-friendly. For one, it allows users to discover details about their online friends, share information, and participate in discussions, almost creating the impression of real-life relationships. Because of the large amount of personal information collected by Facebook, there is a simulated sense of interpersonal trust. This trust factor played a significant role in the Middle Eastern uprisings because the interpersonal relationships built online contributed to the intensity of the revolt and the amount of risk people were willing to take. It was easier to take risks knowing that hundreds of other Facebook friends would be revolting at the same time. In fact, one Egyptian woman highlighted the importance of Facebook during the building stages of the uprising by saying that she was "'friends' with hundreds of Egyptian activists, and was able to learn more about key issues by reading the numerous articles, videos, and other links posted on

various Facebook pages'" (Laipson et al., 51). This virtual sense of community available on Facebook fueled the grassroots uprising beyond what anyone could have imagined.

Twitter, on the other hand, is one of the 165-million blog websites where people post excerpts about news or personal insights in order to receive comments and start a conversation. Twitter, however, is a micro-blog that only allows individuals to share short, 140 word posts with their followers. According to Yamamichi, "Twitter has over 200 million registered accounts, an average of 140 million tweets are sent a day, mobile users have increased by 182% in 2010, and more than 460,000 new accounts have been added everyday in February 2011 " (4). Unlike Facebook, however, this form of social media does not have a high level of media richness because it is mainly text-based. Only recently has Twitter allowed people to upload photos. Although Twitter is not considered as media rich, the platform scored very high in self-disclosure.

The real benefit of using Twitter lies in its ability to spread censored information, which is a great threat to authoritarian regimes that attempt to repress information sharing. For example, in Egypt, reports published by bloggers on human rights abuses by police were central to generating the public climate that facilitated the mass protests at Tahrir Square. In learning that Twitter played a large role in the mobilization, Twitter co-founder Biz Stone reveals that "that was one of the early, eye-opening experiences for us, that made us realize this was not just something in the Bay Area for, you know, technical geeks to fool around with and to find out what each other's up to, but a global-communications system that could be used for almost anything and everything" (Laipson et al., 77). In furthering his point, the potential that blogs have for generating interpersonal trust and communal relationships therefore suggests that they can be used as viable tools in the promotion of democracy.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND U.S. SOFT POWER

The potential for social media to be used as a soft power, public diplomacy and democracy promotion tool has not gone unnoticed by the U.S. government. Because social media encourages users to build online personal profiles detailing what is important and interesting to them, this easily accessible information provides tremendous opportunities for the government to relate to a diverse target audience and approach them as potential allies. For this reason, the Internet and social media will likely become significant tools in the future of international communications and policy building.

The potential for social media to play a major role in the future of international communications came to the attention of the current U.S. administration long before the events of the Arab Spring. Having run the most tech-savvy campaign in American history, the Obama administration demonstrated an early awareness of social media's potential to restructure global communication and international relations. When President Obama first came into office, one of his goals was to fully integrate social media and other 21st century technology into his administration's public diplomacy efforts. In fact, on his first day in office, the President signed a memorandum of Transparency and Open Government, which stated that the Web 2.0 technologies were necessary to "tap into the vast amounts of knowledge…in communities across the country" and from around the world (Dale, 4). With this in mind, the President appointed Judith McHale, former President and CEO of Discovery Communications, as Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. With McHale in office, it became the goal of the administration to make sure that new technology was used effectively and creatively to became an international relations game-changer. In fact, McHale stated that:

Communications advances provide unprecedented opportunities to engage people directly, to connect them to one another, and to dramatically scale up main traditional public diplomacy efforts. They provide the opportunity to move from an old paradigm, in which our government speaks as one to many, to a new model of engaging interactively and collaboratively across lines that might otherwise divide us from people around the world. We must create an institutional framework that can take full advantage of new media, with an understanding that these new tools must be carefully tailored to particular circumstances and always used in the service of a larger strategy. (Dale, 4)

In speaking of a larger strategy, the use of social media as a weapon of soft power has now become understood as an international relations necessity. Many within the federal government are recognizing its unparalleled ability to tap into international hotspots, such as the much sought after Arab world. The potential lies in the fact that many who live in the Middle East are incredibly interconnected and looking to engage in conversation through such advanced methods of communications. This being said, it seems likely that that the U.S. has already tried to test social media's effectiveness as a tool of influence.

So far, the most important publicly known illustration of President Obama's commitment to social media as a mechanism of public diplomacy was the mass distribution of his speech in Cairo. In his speech, he spoke of his desire to improve Arab-American relations and his goal of implementing bottom-up democracy promotion policies such as investing in small companies and public-private partnerships. These initiatives were designed to stabilize the economy and

improve the unemployment rates in hopes of demonstrating Washington's interest in supporting the people of the Middle East, and not just the governments that uphold U.S. policy. In an effort to circulate this speech to as many people as possible, the U.S. government utilized a variety of Internet applications including, but not limited to, social networking sites, podcasts, and a live Webcast on the White House's website. The use of text messages and Twitter updates also played a large role in the President's public diplomacy efforts. Interestingly enough, the text messages were not sent to anyone within the U.S., but were sent to more than 20,000 people primarily in the Middle East and Asia. The text messages were available in Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, and eight other languages, reaching people in more than 200 countries. Translated versions of the speech were available on YouTube, Facebook, and MySpace, as well as the popular South Asian networking site, Orkut (Dale, 5).

While President Obama's Cairo speech exemplifies an initial step in the direction of utilizing social media for soft power and diplomatic purposes, the level of U.S. involvement in the Arab Spring still remains a mystery to many. Some researchers oppose the more commonly accepted notion that the Arab opposition groups led the social media revolution themselves without any support from the U.S., and have attempted to uncover what many suspect of being true. It is believed that the U.S. government was indirectly involved in accelerating the uprisings through the use of social media and several U.S. organizations strategically located near the epicenter of the revolution. This position is very controversial, not only to Egyptians who feel much pride for dismantling their regime, but also to many other nations, cultural groups, and even some Americans. Many people tend to feel that the U.S. administration too often acts as a global police force, intervening in conflicts and taking on the title of liberator only because such actions will support U.S. democracy promotion agendas and economic interests.

In analyzing environments like the Middle East, in which a significant amount of democracy promotion takes place, this negative attitude toward U.S. involvement is extremely common. As a result, many in the current administration recognize that working through organizations that are indirectly connected to the U.S. government, such as political foundations, churches, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), may be the most effective way of promoting democracy. These organizations are often connected with the citizens on a daily basis, and, as a result, are better able to communicate with the public because they have already fostered relationships and trust. Their acceptance within the community ultimately makes their ability to relay information through networking structures much more effective.

A controversial fact that has been largely overlooked regarding potential U.S. involvement in the Arab Spring is that many key leaders in the opposition movements received training and funding from nonprofit human rights organizations headquartered in Washington, D.C. These include the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and Freedom House. Many of these NGOs, which also had offices in Egypt and within the Middle Eastern region, were created by Congress and are financed through the National Endowment for Democracy. This financing organization, which was set up in 1983, channels grants for promoting democracy in developing nations. According to Nixon, the National Endowment receives about $100 million annually from Congress (1). Many NGOs, such as Freedom House, also receive funding directly from the U.S. State Department. In fact, in 2011, the State Department granted $28 million to support activists in countries where governments were blocking social networking sites and using the sites to track and arrest activists. The State Department also aided the activists by providing them with emergency technology to erase any incriminating data from mobile phones showing their involvement in the Arab Spring uprisings,

as well as software to maintain the life of websites that the regime targets for termination. In justifying this action to foster and protect social media usage, Hillary Clinton declared that the U.S. "will stand with those who exercise their fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly in a peaceful way, whether in person, in print, or in pixels on the Internet" (Byers, 1)

While government funding of NGO operations is an indirect act of support, the claim that many NGOs were developing training programs and directly supporting Egyptian opposition leaders is a much more substantial link that could tie the U.S. to the Egyptian revolution. Seeing the potential to mobilize the Egyptian activists, the U.S. government worked through NGOs to employ various strategies to enhance Egyptian receptiveness to the U.S. and democracy. For example, "the International Republican Institute opted to maintain a low-level presence in Egypt, but conduct all of its training of Egyptian activists outside the country to deflect government pressure. In this manner, they managed to train 1,200 Egyptians via programs in the region or in the United States" (Laipson et al., 44). Other organizations such as Freedom House, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the Solidarity Center did not operate from within Egypt, but from regional offices in neighboring nations that still provided a degree of American presence.

Many of these organizations, although taking precautionary steps to avoid it, still experienced firsthand harassment during the deteriorating situation under the repressive regime. There was widespread corruption, regular use of torture, worsening socioeconomic conditions and little political freedom, which all coincided with growing frustration among Egyptian citizens. Laipson et al. reports:

> the multiple exclusion of youth, coupled with the insistence of the
> regime to bloc[k] all avenues of youth participation, threatened to
> radicalize youth activism. Youth activism had been moderate and

reformist in tone and relied exclusively on non-violent tactics. However, continued exclusion and to the extent that Arab regimes do not reform politically and economically, the youth will erupt in one form or another which might lead to the emergence of more radical and militant groups among the opposition… Absent of such a development, youth in Egypt, as in much of the Arab world, will remain a ticking time bomb and is going to sweep away a lot of Western leaning regimes sooner or later unless true reform begins soon. (45)

It appeared that in the Arab world, any progress toward economic and political empowerment was being driven at the sub-national level, leading to the conclusion that authentic political reform and democracy implementation would require a bottom up approach. It was, therefore, to America's benefit to harness the power of the youth before the situation became so dire that joining radical movements proved to be their only resolution. To many within the U.S., this was a very valid threat, as it was becoming widely understood that the only political force that could oppose the strength of the regime was the more radical Islamist group, the Muslim Brotherhood, especially after the electoral gains of Islamist parties in Egypt and Palestine.

Protecting the U.S. primary Middle Eastern ally from radical Islamists was, however, not the only reason why NGOs sought to build relationships with the Egyptian public. Considering the increased government repression and harassment towards NGOs, they found it was nearly impossible to penetrate formal political organizations and parties. For example, one democracy promoter noted, "I had just arrived in Cairo having worked in our Ukraine office five years prior, and Egyptian officials, referring to the 'color revolutions,' told me, 'We know what happened in

Ukraine, and it won't happen here'"(Laipson et al., 44). And in many cases, the Egyptian government withheld operating licenses from NGO workers. Because of this hostility, engagement with less-established opposition groups such as human rights and youth activists became the default strategy as it had become clear that there was no real opportunity for reform within political parties or formal structures. In response, NGOs reached out to youth groups and moderate Islamists who ended up forming the forefront of the Egyptian uprising. This proved to be beneficial for both the NGOs and the activists. Laipson et al. argue that:

> without the active participation of moderate Islamists, calls for political transformation in the Arab world are bound to remain whispers among tiny communities, irrelevant for the larger social fabric, and harmless to authoritarian regimes… democratic change will depend on the existence of large, popular, homegrown, opposition alliances – not outside pressure. To this end, the contribution of moderate Islamists is indispensable and overdue.
>
> (Laipson et al., 100)

Allying with tech-savvy activists rejuvenated the NGO's mission of democracy implementation and dramatically increased their role beyond democracy fundraising. In observing the reliance on mobile and social technology, NGOs adapted their democracy promotion strategy to utilize social media as the "free space" that would be able to foster public support without much censorship from the regime. As a result, many organizations shifted their democracy promotion programs to focus primarily on training youth activists in using social media for political mobilization and, most importantly, for organizing efforts to bridge online activism with offline actions. In working towards this goal, NGOs began to allocate money and

design programs to further educate these online activists about how to strengthen communal ties, build trust, and encourage action for the cause.

Many of these NGOs brought key activists to New York and taught them to use social media and mobile technologies to promote democracy. Those supporting these conferences included Facebook, Google, MTV, Columbia Law School and the State Department (Nixon, 1). NDI also partnered with Google to hold media conferences that brought together activists across the region to help them learn how to use new media tools for mobilization purposes. They focused heavily on Facebook, which was quickly becoming the number one form of online communication. Experts at the conference highlighted Facebook's multiplatform capabilities, such as videos, photos and links, as effective tools for mobilization. NDI also brought Obama campaign experts to Egypt on multiple occasions in response to increased interest in the mobilization aspects of social media. Another NGO, Freedom House, also created the New Generation program which sought to "inject new blood and dynamism into programming by working closely with 'up and coming' activists, training them in the region and in Europe, and bringing them on advocacy tours to the U.S." (Laipson et al.,48). The organization worked especially closely with youth spokespersons, including Wael Ghonim, who mobilized protests around the inhumane treatment of activists and played a critical role in organizing the Egyptian uprising.

While the NGOs found an even more influential democracy promotion strategy in combining social media and the youth activists, the Egyptian citizens who were fed up with the regime found an ally. Because the public sphere remained almost completely detached from any political party or institution, activists had no way to channel their beliefs and concerns into concrete political outcomes until they discovered social media. By partnering with the NGOs to

receive funding and training for social media-based activism, the activists were finally able to get the support they desired. In turn, the U.S. and its NGOs were able to use social media to foster a group of activists and encourage them to promote democracy implementation.

Aside from the funding and education made possible by the NGOs, three catalysts accelerated the transition from online activism to real life mobilization. One catalyst was the labor strikes that became regular occurrences since 2004. As oppression worsened, whenever opposition groups arranged a strike they gained more activists, became harder to ignore, and grew in frequency (Laipson et al., 51). Many U.S. organizations located in Egypt viewed this as an ideal situation and began to strategize mobilization tactics for democracy promotion.

The second catalyst included the Facebook campaign for Khaled Said, a victim who was tortured and received the ultimate penalty of death for speaking his mind. This campaign, however, was more influential than a strike as it brought mobilization into the realm of communication and social media. This marked a milestone by signifying the potential to use social media as a tool for online activism. Within the first 24 hours, "56,000 people signed up for the 'We Are All Khaled Said' page, growing to more than a quarter-of-a-million fans in a month" (Laipson et al., 80). The Khaled Said campaign was the first time social media activism transformed into offline mobilization. This became the model for American NGOs in their research into mobilization tactics.

The third and final turning point consisted of the 2010 Egyptian legislative elections, which essentially was the straw that broke the camel's back. At this point, Egyptians had been protesting for over five years and looked to this election as a chance to take back their country. The regime, however, was not inclined to let this happen and, as a result, deliberately manipulated the elections. Because many in the Egyptian society had high expectations for the

elections and had intended to vote, they expressed their outrage through social media channels (Laipson et al., 52). According to an interview with Jeffrey Grieco, Chief of Global Communications and Governmental Affairs at International Relief and Development (IRD) and former Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs at the U.S. State Department, the elections:

> quickly transformed Facebook into a political networking site…the Egyptian government thought that they could just flick a switch and just turn this thing off if they ever needed to and then they realized, oh my God, we flipped the switch and the thing rerouted through Dubai, through UAE, through Syria and that they couldn't control it. At that point, it was too late because everyone already in that space was having a conversation and they couldn't do anything...they were able to shut down some of the towers around town in Cairo, but quickly the kids found ways to use the 3G and 4Gs to circumvent those and get messaging out to people…it was unstoppable at that point.

In this case, social media was the great enabler. It allowed the grassroots population to turn decades of growing public discontent into a movement without boundaries.

Clearly, social media did not cause the revolution. But the technological capabilities inherent in social media -- its portability, digital camera capability, and internet access -- created a platform in which NGOs could train activists to break through long-established state controls and accelerate the process of democracy. It also provided a previously unavailable global channel of communication which served to vocalize a previously silent community. In an

interview with William Reese, CEO of the International Youth Foundation, he makes an interesting comparison of the communications capabilities of today with what was lacking during World War II when he says:

> today social media is a force to play with…So much information being shared today. Think of how long the holocaust was either just not understood, totally invisible or, if people understood that something was happening, for the most part in Germany or in eastern Europe...yet people didn't know enough about it to either believe it, make it credible, or make it real. There certainly weren't pictures coming out. That couldn't happen today…simply couldn't happen. Today's social media is harder to control by a central government. It doesn't mean that it can't be controlled, or can't be perverted and used by a central government, but by and large over time, social media will defeat a government that is trying to be all controlling in its media relations. You couldn't hide that sort of evil today because the truth will get out.

As we have seen, social media is a platform that offers the ability to share information with the masses, and in doing so, possibly win the hearts and minds of people domestically and abroad. This capability is especially important to the U.S. as building a supportive network in regions like the Middle East would have been much more difficult before. The importance of utilizing social media in international relations today is best summarized by Matt Armstrong, a public affairs blogger, in his statement that "in this age of mass information and precision guided media, everyone from political candidates to terrorists must instantly and continuously interact

with and influence audiences in order to be relevant and competitive (Dale, 1). Social media provides the ideal platform in which this interaction and influence can take place. At this point in the informational age with anti-Americanism growing around the world, in order for the U.S. to regain control and be internationally influential, social media is key.

U.S. GOVERNMENT'S USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ARAB SPRING

There are a number of intriguing connections that implicate the U.S. government in the planning and execution of the Arab uprising in Egypt. For one, many of the NGOs active in the Middle East were funded by the federal government. They brought activists to New York where they were introduced to key members of the U.S. State Department staff, one of whom had traveled around the Middle East for several years meeting activists and noting their dependency on social media and mobile technology. This State Department staffer, Jared Cohen, helped plan and participated in the April 6th Youth Movement, which was the first significant activist protest in Egypt. In preparing for this event, Cohen worked with NGOs to educate activists in how to use social media and mobile technologies to mobilize the uprising and promote democracy. Cohen also organized the Alliance of Youth Summit, which was a conference sponsored by Facebook, Google, YouTube, MTV, Access 360 Media, Columbia Law School and the Public Policy Office of the State Department (Shimatsu, **1**). Cohen's involvement in training the youth in social media activism provides a direct and irrefutable link between the State Department, the protesters in Egypt, and the influence of social media.

To further connect the U.S. administration to the Arab uprisings, the director of the State Department's Public Policy Office, Anne-Marie Slaughter, was present during the activist training conferences. Slaughter also led several democracy promotion and activist-centered projects in Iran, Syria and Egypt. It is also important to note that she is a key adviser to Hillary

Clinton on democracy promotion and national security within the Middle East (Shimatsu, 1). Based on these additional connections, it appears highly likely that the U.S. government did actively support the Egyptian activists who were involved in planning and executing the Arab uprising. It also appears clear that one of the primary ways in which they provided this support was through training in the application of social media tools to promote mobilization and interest in democracy.

THE FUTURE OF SOFT POWER AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Even though we can expect the U.S. government to continue to use social media to support its public diplomacy and soft power initiatives, the broader future of social media as a democracy tool may lie outside the government. Because the government is constrained by resources, as well as departmental oversight and control, the private sector has more opportunity and fewer constraints placed upon it in creatively applying new technology in the process of democratization. Jared Cohen seems to concur with this when he says:

> there are things the private sector can do that the U.S. government
>
> can't do. The big thing is the resources and the capabilities. There
>
> are not a couple hundred [computer] engineers in the State
>
> Department that can build things; that's just not what government
>
> does. You don't necessarily have some of the financial resources to
>
> put behind these things. It's really hard to bring talented young
>
> people in; there are not a lot mechanisms to do it. On some topics,
>
> it's very sensitive for government to be the one doing this.
>
> (Weintraub, 1)

With this in mind, in 2010, Jared Cohen left his State Department position to form and direct a new department at Google called Google Ideas. In building this innovative sector, Google Ideas will work with a variety of stakeholders, including government, private sector, and NGOs, to brainstorm a wide range of topics that are relevant today. Cohen's Google Ideas will focus on a "range of challenges that include everything from the sort of hard challenges like counter-terrorism, counter-radicalization, and nonproliferation, to some of the ones people might expect it to focus on, like development and citizen empowerment" (Weintraub, 1). According to the Washington Post, in an effort to kick off the creation of Google Ideas, Cohen "gathered on Google's nickel some 80 ex-extremists – skinheads, neo-Nazis, jihadists. Now *former* extremists, they knew something about what they spoke, and in collaboration with company employees, terrorist victims, and academic researchers (the former president of Colombia sat with former Colombian guerrillas), they brainstormed on innovative strategies to combat extremism" (Useem, 1). With a newfound freedom that he didn't have while operating at the State Department, Cohen will utilize Google's wide-reaching resources to accomplish what would have been too progressive to accomplish inside the U.S. government. Cohen told *Foreign Policy* that his goal is to "[build] teams of stakeholders with different resources and perspectives to troubleshoot challenges" (Weintraub, 1).

Now that Cohen, the former social media guru of the State Department, has opted to move into the private sector in order to have more freedom, it seems that the future of U.S. public diplomacy and soft power will become more of a collaborative effort in the hands of the most powerful multinational Internet corporation, various NGOs and the U.S. government, all of which have a vested interest in furthering democracy around the world. Since Cohen has left the State Department for Google, many NGOs, such as the National Democratic Institute, also

partnered with Google individually to hold media conferences to bring together activists across the region to help them learn how to use new media tools for mobilization purposes. This is a prime example, probably the first of many to come, of a high-tech American mainstream corporation partnering with the government to apply the full capability of Internet intelligence and social media in hopes of unleashing their potential without government limitations.

Further research will need to be conducted to observe how the government and private industry work both separately and together in the future to further the strategic application of social media in public diplomacy, soft power and foreign policy initiatives.

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CONCLUSION

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Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. government has, until recently, failed to successfully utilize soft power and public diplomacy in establishing a sophisticated communications strategy. Between gaining the title of global Superpower at the end of the war and the terrorist attacks of 9/11, little emphasis was placed on winning the hearts and minds of foreign populations, and therefore little done to maintain a positive global reputation. Many decisions were made that were perceived as only benefiting the U.S. and many actions were completed using hard and unjustifiable power. This foreign relations strategy made much of the global population feel as if the U.S. believed it was an exception, ultimately bringing this idea of "U.S. exceptionalism" to life. The negative feelings growing around the world have essentially resulted in a loss of credibility and respect for the U.S. administration and have fueled foreign governments and extremist groups to make their moves in dismantling the U.S. as a Superpower. No method will be overlooked in this process, and we have seen reactions range from the terrorist attacks of 9/11 to the instantaneous growth of the competitive Chinese economy. One thing that seems clear is that the past techniques of attaining international power are outdated and

ineffective, and, in recognizing this, the U.S. is now moving toward the use of advanced technology and creative methods of strategic communication in its attempt to reaffirm its global position.

As the world is becoming highly globalized and advanced technology is introducing new means of establishing and maintaining international connections, the current administration is finding that in this interconnected world, reputation is everything. Every action and decision made is dissected through a fine lens to make sure it is just and fair. In a time such as this, in order for the U.S. to achieve any short or long-term foreign policy agendas, the support of domestic and international communities cannot be overlooked. To achieve this global support, the current U.S. administration is turning to public diplomacy and soft power tactics to accomplish two things. This strategy will emphasize the best of America's core values, particularly those represented by its democratic ideology, and it will also attract and persuade foreign populations to implement these values in their own countries. To accomplish this, the U.S. is utilizing various media platforms to spread its sphere of influence.

It is important to note, however, that this is not necessarily a new idea. Various media vehicles played a key role in several U.S. conflicts including, but not limited to, the Cold War and the Kosovo conflict. From the analysis of these two international events, it was determined that radio and television, specifically, VOA, RL, RFE and CNN, have the potential to be an international relations force. They have ability to frame conflicts, justify actions, persuade populations to blindly support or disprove a situation, and paint the U.S. as a benevolent Superpower.

These historical events, although using communication mediums differently, both highlight the potential media has to be used or influenced by the government in an effort to

achieve U.S. foreign policy agendas. But because almost all U.S. intervention is often met with a degree of resistance and uncertainty, it is important that the media content broadcasted meets certain criteria in order for the information to be accepted. This is especially the case as U.S.-produced content and government influenced media vehicles are not considered absolute anymore. Today, with Internet and social media technology, it is nearly impossible to come in contact with just one version of a story as there are various media sources and hundreds of individuals contributing to a topic. As a result, in order for an American media vehicle to attract a large and loyal target audience, the content and vehicle itself must be seen as a credible and legitimate source of information. The information shared must be timely, dependable and perceived as objective in its content. This is especially crucial during times of conflict when the U.S. could engage in villainizing the opposition, but, by taking a diplomatic approach, can instead be seen as honest, caring and helpful to the public. Oftentimes, this is accomplished by trying to relate to a foreign population by highlighting and sympathizing with the social problems perpetuated by the nation's regime.

In building relationships with a targeted nation's public, it is also critical that U.S. media vehicles convey consistent understanding of the wants, needs and desires of the population. Often, this involves indicating an understanding and appreciation for their culture, their language, and their values. Particularly important is the appreciation of their unique cultural differences and global vantage points through a perceived two-way conversation. This conveyance of interest in the public mindset is the basis of any relationship and the first step in convincing the population to be an advocate for foreign policy objectives important to U.S. interests.

With these criteria met, several aspects of the current global environment have proved to be beneficial to the U.S. in its mission to implement foreign policies and expand its sphere of influence. For one, the fact that the Internet and its most popular social media capability are growing rampantly has facilitated the ease of communication from the U.S. to international populations. Much of this is because the barriers to entry have declined almost all over the world and social media is nearly impossible to control. Also, the increase in international democratization has made it much easier for the U.S. to strategically communicate with democratic populations all across the world. Because these citizens value ideals, such as freedom of speech and the importance of public opinion and participation, they will be more likely to publicly voice their frustrations. This provides an opportunity for the U.S. to determine the wants and needs of the population. Having a clear understanding of this will provide the U.S. with insights necessary to communicate more relevant and emotive content, thereby increasing its potential to gain attraction and win public support.

The fact that many of the nations that are considered a national security threat or of economic interest also have populations that are repressed in some form provides an opportunity to build public support for the U.S. This is mainly because people who live under repressive regimes desire many of the values which make up a democratic society. They appreciate the right of free speech and the media freedom, as well as social media capabilities, because they contrast so dramatically with the repression they are confronted with in their own countries. The societal repression ultimately creates an ideal environment for the U.S. to target its foreign policy agendas because there is a degree of receptiveness and admiration for the less restricted U.S. media. When this is the case, social media has the potential to be turned into a mobilization and grassroots tool for democracy promotion.

Clearly the expansion of social media has changed the landscape of international communications and provided new possibilities for the acceptance and implementation of U.S. foreign policies. Social media is particularly useful for reaching a large variety of audiences and stimulating more interaction and engagement than any other medium. Much of this has to do with the fact that it is instantaneous, real-time and user-generated, ultimately resulting in the collapse of time and space in the communications environment. The unprecedented success of social media in mobilizing communities and promoting democracy during the Arab Spring has certainly focused the global spotlight on these capabilities. It is for this reason that it will without a doubt become an integral part of strategic communication and international relations.

The success of social media in recent events, however, does not take away from the effectiveness of more traditional media. Even though radio and television may be considered outdated, these mediums still have great value in public diplomacy and soft power initiatives. While social media is a conduit that feeds off of users' ideas and emotions and accelerates their global transmission in the hopes of inciting change, radio and television also have great value in their ability to directly incite action and change. In fact, television maintains a strong role in people's lives all over the world. One reason for this is because, like social media, it can be viewed on multiple platforms and devices. Another key reason why television continues to be influential is because it is a visual medium. Its success lies in its ability to frame situations and manipulate perceptions through use of emotional drama portrayed visually and auditorily. Therefore, the opinions of the public can be easily swayed based on the selected story lines and images, which may easily frame and promote a political agenda. Radio will also maintain its position as a strategic communication tool as there is a level of intimacy that results from its ability to create a so-called "theatre of the mind". Although it might not be able to compete with

the instantaneous communication provided by social media or the visual appeal provided by television, radio serves as a "whisper in the ear" which is just as effective in long-term soft power and public diplomacy operations.

Although radio, television and social media have the ability to inform and influence foreign populations and accelerate their support of U.S. foreign policies, there is more to be considered about the global environment and the future of soft power and public diplomacy. Going forward in this increasingly competitive world, many hope that the U.S. will prevail as the most powerful nation in the 21st century. This is possible, but the definition of U.S. power in this information age will no longer be based exclusively upon domination through hard power. The way in which U.S. achieves global influence today is unlike any strategy used in the past. Successful outcomes in the realm of international relations will depend more on the ability to rely on others. Traditional power has diffused and now power will be realized in the form of establishing and maintaining relationships and attaining global support. No longer will it be relevant to ask, "who is number one?" Being perceived as number one will not indicate achievement in the future of our global society. Instead, the ability to work with others will become more desirable because partnerships and cooperative efforts can accomplish goals that hard power cannot. To achieve this, the U.S. will need to balance the idea of hierarchical power with a more collaborative approach. In a world that has become so networked, an international relations policy based upon commands, demands and threats may no longer be effective but may, in fact, be detrimental to reaching global goals that require cooperation. Two-way communication, credibility, attraction, sympathy...these are the things which will generate respect and endearment for the U.S. and its democratic ideals.

Today, we are living in a world where Islamic fundamentalism and other Third World threats such as spread of WMD and terrorism have replaced communism as the primary foreign policy concern. Many believe that modern forms of media will be the new battlefield for winning the hearts and minds of those abroad. Mediums such as radio, television and especially social media will provide a soft power platform in which the U.S. can rebuild its reputation and develop the international support it needs to maintain its sphere of influence. Media will serve as a covertly influential, dialogue-oriented tool to engage foreign publics and shift their role from targeted audiences to partners. Building mutual understanding and respect will thus become the new foreign policy agenda as the U.S. works toward building a supportive global network.

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