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Public Diplomacy in the News: Black Myth Wukong, Finland's Disinformation Schooling, & LA's Olympic Brand ^[1]

“Public Diplomacy in the News” is a CPD Blog series by Andrew Dubbins that spotlights noteworthy stories on public diplomacy topics such as cultural diplomacy, nation branding, exchange programs, international events and conferences, digital diplomacy, and strategic global communications.

Black Myth Wukong elevates Chinese gaming as global cultural force. China's video game *Black Myth: Wukong* has achieved global success, selling 10 million copies in just three days and marking a shift in the Chinese government's attitude toward gaming as a tool of soft

power. Previously critical of video games for their impact on youth, Chinese state media now praises the game for promoting Chinese culture globally. The game's success is seen as "China's K-pop moment," with its rich cultural storytelling and iconic Chinese mythological characters. Despite controversies surrounding the game's leadership, *Wukong* is celebrated for its quality and potential to reshape China's global cultural influence.

Lizzi C. Lee / Rest of World

Finland empowers students with media literacy to combat disinformation. Finland integrates media literacy into its education system from preschool onwards, aiming to equip students with the skills to identify disinformation, avoid scams, and debunk propaganda. Teachers are given flexibility to customize lessons and engage students in critical discussions about current news, allowing them to analyze and assess sources collaboratively. Finland's approach contrasts with more rigid curriculums in countries like the U.S., where media literacy isn't as deeply embedded.

Chris Livesay / CBS Sunday Morning

A call for authenticity and diversity at LA 2028 Olympics. As Los Angeles prepares to host the 2028 Olympics, public intellectuals and artists emphasize the need to present a more authentic version of the city beyond the superficial imagery of palm trees and the Hollywood sign, writes Thomas Curwen for the *Los Angeles Times*. They argue that the real L.A. is a complex, diverse metropolis shaped by its immigrant communities, economic challenges, and cultural vibrancy. The Olympics offer a rare opportunity to address pressing issues like housing and sustainability while showcasing the city's rich cultural tapestry. Rather than perpetuating old cliches, the event should highlight L.A.'s unique blend of realities and possibilities.

Thomas Curwen / Los Angeles Times

John Kerry urges U.S.-China cooperation and swift action on global climate crisis. In a discussion with *The Washington Post* about U.S. diplomacy and climate change, former Secretary of State John Kerry emphasized the importance of collaboration with China in addressing global environmental challenges. He highlighted China's significant progress in renewable energy deployment, noting that it has now surpassed the rest of the world in its clean energy efforts. Kerry stressed the need for continued U.S. leadership, bipartisan cooperation, and a stronger push toward reducing fossil fuel reliance, warning of the urgent environmental crisis humanity faces. He advocated for accelerating the clean energy transition and increased accountability among policymakers to ensure meaningful progress.

The Washington Post

Mike Sfraga confirmed as first U.S. Arctic Ambassador amid rising tensions. Mike Sfraga, a geographer and chair of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission, has been confirmed as the United States' first Arctic ambassador after a 1.5-year wait. Despite opposition from many Senate Republicans, Sfraga's nomination, championed by Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski, passed with bipartisan support. The new role will involve advancing U.S. interests in the Arctic and strengthening international cooperation in the region. While Sfraga's qualifications were praised, some Republicans voiced concerns over his past interactions with Russian and Chinese officials. Sfraga's appointment comes amid rising geopolitical tensions

in the Arctic.

Yereth Rosen / Alaska Beacon
