

CPD PERSPECTIVES ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Paper 1, 2013

Considering the “Illogical Patchwork”:

The Broadcasting Board of Governors and U.S. International Broadcasting

By Emily T. Metzgar

الدبلوماسية العامة

La Diplomatie Publique

Общественная дипломатия

Public Diplomacy

PUBLICZNA DYPLOMACJA

הסברה

Publieksdiplomatie

Diplomacia Pública

公共外交

Δημόσια Διπλωματία

Публична дипломация

**Considering the “Illogical Patchwork”:
The Broadcasting Board of Governors and
U.S. International Broadcasting**

Emily T. Metzgar, Ph.D.

February 2013
Figueroa Press
Los Angeles

**CONSIDERING THE “ILLOGICAL PATCHWORK”:
THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND
U.S. INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING**

Emily T. Metzgar
Published by
FIGUEROA PRESS
840 Childs Way, 3rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90089
Phone: (213) 743-4800
Fax: (213) 743-4804
www.figueroapress.com

Figueroa Press is a division of the USC Bookstore
Copyright © 2013 all rights reserved

Notice of Rights

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior written permission from the author, care of Figueroa Press.

Notice of Liability

The information in this book is distributed on an “As is” basis, without warranty. While every precaution has been taken in the preparation of this book, neither the author nor Figueroa nor the USC Bookstore shall have any liability to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by any text contained in this book.

Figueroa Press and the USC Bookstore are trademarks of the University of Southern California

ISBN 13: 978-0-18-215198-1
ISBN 10: 0-18-215198-0

*For general inquiries or to request additional copies of this paper
please contact:*

USC Center on Public Diplomacy at the Annenberg School
University of Southern California
3502 Watt Way, G4
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0281
Tel: (213) 821-2078; Fax: (213) 821-0774
cpd@usc.edu
www.usepublicdiplomacy.org

CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy

CPD Perspectives is a periodic publication by the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, and highlights scholarship intended to stimulate critical thinking about the study and practice of public diplomacy.

Designed for both the practitioner and the scholar, this series will illustrate the breadth of public diplomacy—its role as an essential component of foreign policy and the intellectual challenges it presents to those seeking to understand this increasingly significant factor in international relations.

CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy is available electronically in PDF form on the Center's web site (www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org) and in hard copy by request.

About the USC Center on Public Diplomacy at the Annenberg School

The USC Center on Public Diplomacy seeks to advance and enrich the study and practice of public diplomacy through its research and publication programs, professional training and public events.

The USC Center on Public Diplomacy (CPD) was established in 2003 as a partnership between the Annenberg School for Communication and the School of International Relations at the University of Southern California. It is a joint research, analysis and professional training organization dedicated to furthering the study and practice of global public diplomacy.

Since its inception, the Center has become a productive and recognized leader in the public diplomacy research and scholarship community. CPD has benefited from unique international support within academic, corporate, governmental, and public policy circles. It has become the definitive go-to destination for practitioners and international leaders in public diplomacy, while pursuing an innovative research agenda.

For more information about the Center, visit
www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org

Considering the “Illogical Patchwork”: The Broadcasting Board of Governors and U.S. International Broadcasting

Abstract

At its December 2012 board meeting, members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) announced that they needed more time to consider a plan that would create a single executive responsible for day-to-day operations of the organization responsible for overseeing U.S. government-supported international broadcasting efforts. Operating with a budget of more than \$700 million and producing content in more than 50 languages, the Broadcasting Board of Governors qualifies as one of the world’s largest international news organizations. Using discussions about the need for reorganization of the BBG’s management structure as impetus, this article discusses the role of the Broadcasting Board of Governors in American public diplomacy efforts and considers its accompanying responsibilities as a large, media management organization. Noting a dearth of academic and policy-oriented research focused on the BBG, this article seeks to provide a foundation for future discussion of issues surrounding its leadership, its performance and its future.

Introduction

At its December 2012 board meeting, members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) announced that they needed more time to consider a plan that would create a single executive responsible for day-to-day operations of the organization responsible for overseeing U.S. government-supported international broadcasting efforts.¹ Operating with a budget of more than \$700 million and producing content in more than 50 languages, the Broadcasting Board of Governors qualifies as one of the world’s largest international news organizations.² Despite the size and scope of its operations, however, the BBG is an infrequent topic of discussion in academic or policy contexts. With respect to media

coverage, evidence from recent months reveals an organization most likely to be mentioned in the context of organizational challenges. These challenges are many including: ill-fated decisions to change mechanisms for content distribution; failed efforts to eliminate broadcasts in certain languages; controversies surrounding dismissal of journalists at various broadcasters; debates about both the cost of contracting for and the accuracy of audience measurements; worries about turnover on the BBG’s governing board; and persistently poor performance in surveys evaluating workplace quality in the federal government.

The BBG is a large, government-funded organization charged with overseeing the global operations of five different broadcasters. Each broadcaster has its own mission, although in practice, the missions and audiences of broadcasters occasionally overlap with others in the U.S. international broadcasting (USIB) stable. Additionally, each of the five broadcasters has its own budget, its own history, its own culture, and its own relationship with members of Congress and foreign audiences. *The New York Times* once mused that “The United States government may be the largest broadcaster that few Americans know about.”³ This is attributable, at least in part, to the fact that the content produced by the five broadcasters has not been easily available to American audiences in the United States.⁴ This results in the lack of any domestic constituency for most of the broadcasters. It also means there is little independent analysis of the quality of the content produced by the broadcasters, few efforts to verify the accuracy of the organization’s self-reported performance indicators, and no clear method for assessing return on taxpayers’ investment in the organization as whole.

A pattern of inattention to the BBG on the part of academics, policymakers, and domestic journalists is perhaps not surprising. The BBG is a complicated entity that is difficult to discuss in isolation. This article presents information necessary for understanding the Broadcasting Board of Governors, while also making an argument for the importance of increased academic, policy, and media attention to the independent federal agency. The Broadcasting

Board of Governors is both a large foreign-policy institution and a significant media management organization. It is therefore an important topic for discussion in the American public diplomacy context. Identifying the five broadcasters for which the BBG has responsibility, considering the statutory justifications for the BBG and its place in American foreign policy, and presenting current discussions about management structure for the organization, this article suggests the BBG is worthy of more serious academic, policy, and media attention than it has hitherto received.

Discussion begins with consideration of international broadcasting as a component of public diplomacy. Attention then turns to an introduction of each of the five broadcasters under the BBG’s purview. Statutory justification for the BBG specifically, and for U.S. international broadcasting more generally, is the next topic for consideration, including mention of the legislation that has prevented the formal dissemination of USIB content in the United States. With all the preceding as context, discussion then moves to the management structure of the BBG, long-standing concerns about the ineffectiveness of the current arrangement, and consideration of the possibility of the appointment of a single leader to the drive the organization into the future.

Public diplomacy, the BBG, and international broadcasting

Public diplomacy is generally understood as a country’s efforts to engage foreign publics. It is one of many tools in a nation’s foreign policy toolbox and is used accordingly by the United States “to promote U.S. interests abroad.”⁵ American public diplomacy efforts can be divided into five categories including mediated diplomacy, public information, political action, educational and cultural exchange programs, and international news channels.⁶ The work of the Broadcasting Board of Governors and its efforts to “inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy”⁷ clearly fall into the category of international news channels.

Writing about international broadcasting, communication scholar Monroe Price calls it “the use of electronic media by one society to shape the opinion of the people and leaders of another.”⁸ While some chafe at the categorization of international broadcasters and their employees as participants in a country’s public diplomacy efforts,⁹ when considered as part of the broader foreign policy picture, international broadcasters are indisputably part of a country’s efforts to reach foreign audiences. An article in *The Economist* put state-sponsored international broadcasting in context, suggesting that having an international news channel is increasingly a status symbol for leading players in the global arena.¹⁰ Relatedly, public diplomacy expert Philip Seib has argued that when public diplomacy efforts such as international broadcasting are “wrapped in the trappings of journalism” they have added credibility.¹¹ Seib also suggests that longtime associations between public diplomacy and propaganda should give international broadcasters added incentive to engage in ethical and independent journalistic practices in order to heighten credibility among foreign audiences.¹²

The BBG’s mission statement stresses the journalistic intent of USIB, emphasizing the broadcasters’ protections from political interference and distancing them from any government tendency to produce propaganda instead of even-handed journalism.¹³ An unpublished dissertation examining the BBG suggests that the changing structure of government control over U.S. international broadcasting following the end of the Cold War, manifesting in the creation of the BBG, has made it more difficult for policymakers to influence broadcast content. This firewall, it is suggested, allows broadcasters more professional independence¹⁴ and presumably leads to heightened credibility for the content.

Although some experts predicted a decline in the importance of international broadcasting in the aftermath of the Cold War, James Glassman, a career journalist, one-time chair of the BBG, and former U.S. Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, spoke of its continued importance noting “My view has always been that U.S. international broadcasting is journalism with

purpose, not, as many have argued, to burnish the U.S. image, but rather, to advance vital U.S. interests.”¹⁵ Consistent with this view, the missions of each of the broadcasters comprising U.S. international broadcast efforts demonstrate a commitment to journalism in the interest of free speech and democracy promotion.

The five content producers in the U.S. international broadcasting stable are Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, Radio & Television Martí, and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks. Together, these broadcasters reach a reported global audience of 175 million people.¹⁶ The Broadcasting Board of Governors oversees them all.¹⁷ The following section offers a brief introduction to each of the five broadcasters that comprise U.S. international broadcast efforts as part of a larger public diplomacy strategy (see Figure 1).

U.S. international broadcasters

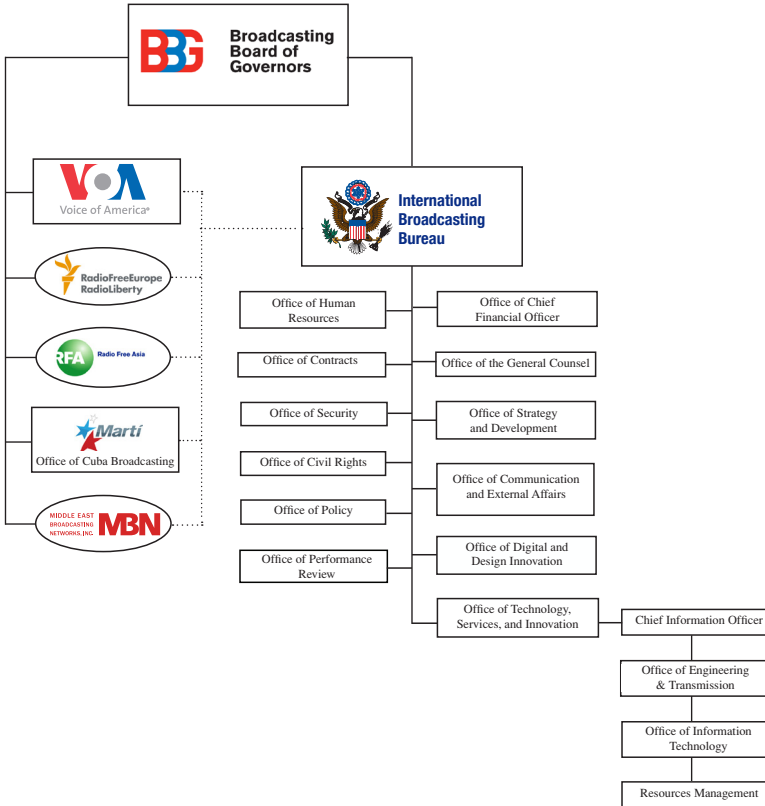
Voice of America

Founded in 1942, Voice of America is the flagship U.S. international broadcaster. It is one of the two federal broadcasters under the direct management of the BBG (see Figure 1) as opposed to the three private broadcasters operating as BBG grantees, an arrangement which is discussed in more detail below. VOA employs more than 1,200 people and operates with a budget of more than \$200 million. It broadcasts in 43 languages and has a global audience of approximately 141 million.¹⁸ VOA’s charter, signed by President Gerald Ford in 1976, requires the broadcaster to provide “balanced and comprehensive projection of significant American thought and institutions... presenting the policies of the United States clearly and effectively.”¹⁹ It is also called upon to provide a forum for responsible debate on these issues.

Officially, VOA is distinguished from the BBG’s other broadcasters in several ways. First, it is the oldest, having its origins in the Office of War Information during World War Two. Second, it is the only one of the U.S.-government funded broadcasters required

Figure 1.

Broadcasting Board of Governors



to present a view of the United States and its policies, rather than to function primarily as a surrogate broadcaster in less-than-free media environments. When editorials were introduced into the VOA line-up during the Reagan Administration, for example, many believed this jeopardized the truth-telling mission the broadcaster had cultivated with its first transmission when it declared “The news may be good or bad. We shall tell you the truth.”²⁰ Third, VOA’s

mission is global rather than regional. This distinction becomes clear with the introduction of the other U.S. broadcasters.²¹

VOA has been at the center of controversies about both quality of content and mechanism of content delivery. In February 2012, for example, the Voice of America Russian Service posted an interview on its website with Alexi Navalny, a leading Russian opposition figure. The interview was a coup for VOA’s Russian language program, especially since broadcasts in that language had been limited to internet distribution only after budget cuts eliminated television and radio funding in 2008. The problem with the interview was that it was a fabrication. Navalny himself called it “100% fake.”²² VOA later issued an apology and U.S.-based news reports suggest the broadcaster has since made its peace with Navalny.²³

Prior to the Navalny dustup, VOA had earned domestic media coverage and a Congressional rebuke when the BBG’s management decided to eliminate shortwave radio broadcasts to China, instead shifting the cost savings to production and distribution of internet and mobile media content. A vocal reaction from VOA Mandarin language service employees and the intervention of strong China critics in Congress led to the scuttling of this reallocation of resources.²⁴

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

Voice of America may be the best known U.S. international broadcaster, but there are four others producing content designed to help facilitate American foreign policy goals around the globe. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is a non-federal grantee of the BBG, functioning as a “surrogate broadcaster” or as a professional substitute for audiences in countries without free and professional media traditions of their own. This grantee “broadcasts uncensored news and information...to countries where a free press is either banned by the government or not fully established.”²⁵

Founded 60 years ago, RFE/RL is widely credited with having played a central role in the collapse of communism in 1989 and in inspiring the new generation of leaders that appeared thereafter. In fact, in 1991 the former president of Estonia nominated the broadcaster for the Nobel Peace Prize.²⁶ In the aftermath of the Cold War, RFE/RL began broadcasting in regions beyond its original range and its audience now includes listeners in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.²⁷ This expansion of broadcast area is often pointed to as an example of overlap among U.S. international broadcasters since VOA and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, another of the U.S. international broadcasters, also produce content for some of these audiences.

According to the latest BBG annual report, RFE/RL broadcasts are heard in 21 countries in 28 languages with a combined weekly audience of more than 20 million. Its budget in 2011 was \$92.7 million. It employs 400 full-time journalists and 750 freelancers while staffing 19 local news bureaus.²⁸ The scale of this operation leads its website to proclaim “RFE/RL is one of the most comprehensive news operations in the world.”²⁹

The Russian language component of this broadcaster, however, has changed significantly in just the last few months. In September 2012, the broadcaster fired 33 Russian language journalists and staff members following the passage of a Russian law preventing foreign news organizations from broadcasting on domestic AM airwaves.³⁰ Content will continue to be available via the internet, but a protest lodged with the U.S. Congress is seeking reinstatement of the journalists, claiming the firings specifically targeted reporters and specialists who focused on human rights issues in Russia. The president of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Steven Korn, defended the move as an effort to modernize the broadcaster’s operations. The conservative Heritage Foundation, however, has called this series of events “the greatest crisis in RL’s history.”³¹ In response to the negative publicity surrounding these dismissals, BBG announced a six-month investigation into the broadcaster’s operations in Russia³² and Korn was subsequently relieved of duty.³³

Radio Free Asia

RFE/RL’s sister, non-profit U.S. government grantee broadcaster is Radio Free Asia (RFA). It was established through the International Broadcasting Act of 1994, discussed in more detail below. RFA began broadcasting in 1995 and currently broadcasts in nine languages: Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Tibetan, Uyghur and Vietnamese.³⁴ Its mission is to “provide accurate and timely news and information to Asian countries whose governments prohibit access to a free press.”³⁵ The broadcaster employs more than 250 people and it operates with a budget of almost \$40 million.³⁶

Several of its language services have been targeted for downsizing or elimination by the BBG, although members of Congress have intervened to preserve funding in some cases. Broadly speaking, inevitable appeals on the part of USIB employees to Congressional overseers and the frequent Congressional attention in response naturally raise questions about how insulated from political pressures all the broadcasters really are if Congressional intervention can result in the overturning of BBG management decisions with which it disagrees.

At RFA’s founding, the *CQ Almanac* described the broadcaster as the “brainchild” of then-Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (DE), noting the senator readily acknowledged the project would upset China. About the introduction of this likely irritant to the U.S.-China bilateral relationship at the time, Senator Biden said, “To be sure, China will be unhappy. But Beijing’s petulance ought not to guide American policy.”³⁷

Several of the countries whose audiences are targeted by RFA actively resist the content, jamming broadcasts and blocking internet access. Similar government reactions to USIB content worldwide have led to the BBG’s ongoing efforts to develop circumvention technologies allowing audiences to access USIB content despite their governments’ ongoing attempts to block access.³⁸

Almost 20 years after RFA’s founding, China continues to resist the broadcaster by refusing to issue visas to individuals working for it. In fact, the Chinese government’s recalcitrance in issuing visas for journalists employed by RFA or VOA led members of Congress to introduce the Chinese Media Reciprocity Act in 2011. The legislation would require China to issue as many visas to employees of USIBs as the United States issues to journalists working for Chinese government-sponsored media outlets. China’s failure to do so would result in the United States taking action to expel Chinese journalists already in the United States.³⁹ Criticized for its likelihood to generate headlines that would damage the United States’ reputation as a promoter of press freedom,⁴⁰ the legislation nevertheless demonstrates the intensity of Congressional interest in U.S. international broadcasters and a willingness to intervene to influence their performance.

Radio and Television Martí

Like VOA, Radio and Television Martí is operated directly by the BBG, rather than as a non-profit grantee like the other three broadcasters. Located within the BBG’s Office of Cuba Broadcasting (see Figure 1), it is a Miami-based effort dedicated solely to producing content for Cuba. It has an annual budget of almost \$30 million and is named after the nineteenth century Cuban independence fighter José Martí.⁴¹ It began broadcasting in 1985⁴² and broadcasts only in Spanish. The BBG’s annual report calls the broadcaster “a one-of-a-kind service that brings unbiased, objective information to the Cuban people.”⁴³

Although all of its broadcasts into Cuba are jammed by that government, the broadcaster reports having “a unique relationship with Cuban bloggers and dissidents” and boasts a nearly 500,000–name list of email and text message recipients.⁴⁴ Total broadcast audience numbers are not available, but Martí reports an updated web presence beginning in 2011 has increased web traffic by more than 1,000 percent.⁴⁵ The continued existence of the broadcaster, despite concerns about both its effectiveness and its reported

audience numbers, is attributed to the influence of ongoing anti-Castro sentiment in the U.S. Congress.⁴⁶ On this subject, a report in *CQ Weekly* quoted an unnamed State Department official saying “The board [BBG] would like to get rid of Cuban broadcasting because it’s jammed anyway and no one in Cuba can listen to it, but anti-Cuban lawmakers won’t allow that.”⁴⁷

A recent controversy concerning Radio and Television Martí involved a May 2012 editorial posted by the director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting declaring that Cuban Cardinal Jaime Ortega was a “lackey” of the Cuban government. The editorial was representative of criticisms of the Cardinal among Cuban exiles in the United States, but not representative of public positions taken by the U.S. government.⁴⁸ Writing about this incident, *The Washington Post* noted “The stinging editorial against Cardinal Jaime Ortega—signed by Radio and TV Martí’s director, Carlos Garcia-Perez—is significant because Martí is a U.S. government agency, with its board of directors appointed by the White House and its policies coordinated with the State Department to direct messages to Cubans.”⁴⁹

Concerned about the message that the broadcaster’s condemnation of the Cardinal would send when the Church in Cuba had previously been praised by the United States for its humanitarian efforts, members of Congress wrote to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton saying “These words, published in the name of the U.S. government, are unacceptable and should not be allowed to stand without comment or rejection by the Administration.”⁵⁰ The editorial was subsequently removed from the broadcaster’s website.

The incident highlights a situation unique among the five U.S. international broadcasters since Radio and Television Martí may be the only USIB entity that can point to having an interested domestic constituency outside of Congress. Indeed, one summary of the incident noted the editorial was representative of criticism of the Cardinal circulating among the Cuban exile community in South Florida at the time, implying that the broadcaster may be more

influenced by the exile community than it is by U.S. foreign policy positions.⁵¹

Additionally, although Voice of America has been broadcasting editorials since the Reagan Administration, the incident points to questions about U.S. international broadcasters’ commitment to the journalistic principle of objectivity. Setting aside the politics surrounding the topic addressed in the editorial, its removal after a strong Congressional response raises concerns about the independence of broadcasters funded by the U.S. government. The need for objective journalism as part of a public diplomacy strategy was exactly the issue raised by Philip Seib when he wrote about “transnational journalism.” For countries engaged in the production of public diplomacy content that is “wrapped in the trappings of journalism,”⁵² the appearance of journalistic characteristics alone is unlikely to be enough to ensure credibility in the eyes of receiving audiences.

Middle East Broadcasting Networks

The fifth U.S. broadcaster under the purview of the BBG is the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN). It employs more than 700 people and operates with a budget of more than \$110 million. MBN is the third, non-profit, private grantee of the BBG and it operates Alhurra Television and Radio Sawa with broadcasts to 21 Arabic-speaking countries and a reported audience of about 33 million. Its mission is to “provide objective, accurate, and relevant news and information to the people of the Middle East about the region, the world, and the United States.”⁵³

MBN is headquartered in Springfield, Virginia but has bureaus and stringers around the Middle East and Europe. Founded in 2002, it is the newest of the BBG’s five broadcast entities. The establishment of MBN was clearly a reaction to anti-American sentiment in the Middle East, made painfully apparent in the region’s post-9/11 attitudes and public opinion surveys.⁵⁴ Still, some have argued the assumption that other media in the region were negatively

predisposed to the United States—the primary argument used to justify investment in this new broadcaster—was flawed.⁵⁵

Pointing to a variety of concerns about MBN’s broadcasters, *The Washington Post* cited critics who argue that the U.S. government erred in its assumption that MBN’s efforts would meet with the same successes as Radio Free Europe during the Cold War.⁵⁶ When Alhurra began broadcasting in 2004, for example, *The Washington Post* called it the “U.S. government’s largest and most expensive effort to sway foreign opinion over the airwaves since the creation of Voice of America in 1942.”⁵⁷ In a sign of problems within the broadcaster, just two years after its launch Alhurra’s first news director resigned citing the broadcaster’s “tendency to please Washington and not the audience.”⁵⁸

Meanwhile, Radio Sawa, which began broadcasting in 2002, was the target of a controversial 2004 draft report from the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of State. According to *The Washington Post*, “The draft report said that while Radio Sawa has been promoted as a ‘heavily researched broadcasting network,’ the research concentrated primarily on gaining audience share, not on measuring whether Radio Sawa was influencing its audiences.”⁵⁹ The implication was that the channel’s emphasis on entertainment, which was found to comprise seventy-five percent of the content, was giving short shrift to the kind of content that justified the channel’s creation in the first place.

Among other concerns about the effectiveness of MBN’s content and the possibility of its content or language duplicating the efforts of other U.S. international broadcasters, MBN was the subject of a scathing investigative report in 2008 produced jointly by *Pro Publica* and *60 Minutes*. Visiting the broadcaster’s headquarters, the report’s investigators found “an untrained, largely foreign staff with little knowledge of the country whose values and policies they were hired to promote.”⁶⁰ These findings were not inconsistent with earlier missteps on the part of MBN’s broadcasters, including the greeting of its largely Muslim audience one Easter with “Jesus is risen today!”⁶¹

The *Pro Publica* and *60 Minutes* report criticized lax oversight procedures and observed that the person tasked with managing the entire operation did not even speak Arabic. The highly critical exposé did not gain much public traction, but it provided fodder for policymakers who were already concerned about the BBG’s willingness and ability to oversee all the operations for which it is responsible. The universality of such concerns regarding all five of the broadcasters is an issue addressed in more detail later in this article.

Speaking in 2011 about the performance of MBN broadcasters during the Arab Spring, the then-chair of the BBG’s board, Walter Isaacson, declared “We have to be credible, informative and accurate. That’s core to our values... If ever there is a case in which coverage of an event might not seem in line with U.S. policy, it doesn’t matter. We cover it.”⁶² Isaacson’s subsequent resignation, further cuts to all BBG broadcasters, and ongoing Congressional intervention in various aspects of all five broadcasters’ operations suggest the idealism conveyed by Isaacson’s statement may not play in the real world of U.S. international broadcasting.

Authorization for the BBG

The BBG’s five broadcasters demonstrate the geographic range of USIB and the differing political and foreign policy rationales employed to justify each broadcaster’s existence. Discussion now turns to the statutory justification for the existence of the broadcasters as a whole. As discussion below indicates, although the United States has been engaged in international broadcasting since World War II, the BBG is relatively new on the scene. An understanding of legislation leading up to the creation of the BBG helps provide context for the current environment and for the organizational structure represented in Figure 1.

The Smith-Mundt Act of 1948

The foundation for contemporary U.S. international broadcasting efforts was laid with passage of the U.S. Information and Educational

Exchange Act of 1948, also known as the Smith-Mundt Act.⁶³ The law authorized American public diplomacy efforts, including international broadcasting; international information programs; and educational and cultural exchanges. The bill was passed only after extended Congressional debate about, first, the potential dangers of having Soviet schoolteachers roaming the American heartland as part of exchange programs, and second, concerns that the government’s international broadcasting efforts could pose unfair competition to the country’s nascent domestic broadcast industry.⁶⁴

Congress eventually passed the bill when it became clear the Soviet Union had launched an actively anti-American propaganda campaign in Western Europe following the end of World War Two. Congress decided the United States needed to play a more forceful role in countering Soviet disinformation efforts and in promoting the democratic values enshrined in the American constitution. International broadcasting was the method selected for promoting this message. In these early days, Voice of America was the only U.S. broadcaster, having first emerged as a wartime tool of the Office of War Information, but later moving to the Department of State. It remained within the State Department until creation of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) in 1953. When Congress folded USIA into the State Department in 1998, USIB, under the purview of the BBG, became an independent entity. This shift is discussed in more detail in the section below focusing on the Foreign Affairs Reform & Restructuring Act of 1998.

In 1949, the *CQ Almanac* summarized the Smith-Mundt Act and its mandates for public diplomacy as having two primary purposes: “One is an information service stemming from the Office of War Information’s foreign activities and including the radio ‘Voice of America’... The other is an exchange of students, teachers, and technical consultants between the United States and foreign countries... Both aim to promote better understanding of the United States and strengthen international relations.”⁶⁵ Still, the legislation only passed with conditions, one of which was intended to protect the domestic broadcast industry by preventing real-time distribution of USIB content within the United States.

In amendments to the legislation after 1948, the real-time dissemination ban evolved to a more complete blockage of USIB content within the United States, making such content not only unavailable to the public for a period of time after initial broadcast, but also exempting it from Freedom of Information Act requests.⁶⁶ With the advent of the internet and its disregard for national borders, it is now easier for Americans stateside to consume USIB content, but it is still not readily available in a format accessible for U.S.-based scholars and journalists to analyze the content and its messages in any methodical fashion.⁶⁷

A 2011 Congressional proposal to remove the domestic dissemination ban resulted in cries that the American public would be overrun with government-sponsored propaganda from international broadcasters and other federal entities.⁶⁸ Since President Obama signed the National Defense Authorization Act into law at the beginning of 2013, however, the domestic dissemination ban is now set for repeal. As of July 1, 2013, the ban will no longer be in effect. The end of the domestic dissemination ban means the elimination of a significant hurdle to increased visibility for U.S. international broadcasting among the American public.

The International Broadcasting Act of 1994

In 1994, the U.S. Congress passed the International Broadcasting Act (IBA)⁶⁹ declaring “It is the policy of the United States to promote the right of freedom of opinion and expression, including the freedom ‘to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers,’ in accordance with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”⁷⁰ The legislation was intended to help consolidate U.S. international broadcasting efforts and to ensure that the American message of freedom of expression would be spread throughout the post-Cold War world. It established the Broadcasting Board of Governors within the United States Information Agency as the entity responsible for managing USIB. It also authorized the creation of Radio Free Asia as an USIB grantee targeting regions of Asia without independent indigenous media outlets of their own.

The International Broadcasting Act was part of the much larger Foreign Relations Authorization Act of 1994 and it comprised Title III of the legislation. This part of the legislation established standards for USIB, created the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and articulated the authorities of the Board including the mandate that all USIB content be consistent with U.S. foreign policy objectives. It also established the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), the arm of the BBG which provides operational guidance and support for the organization and its broadcasters on legal, financial and technical issues⁷¹ (see Figure 1).

The legislation repealed the Board for International Broadcasting Act of 1973 that had previously governed USIB operations. The change mandated that all oversight and management duties of USIB be relegated to the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

As noted to above, the Act also laid the groundwork for Radio Free Asia as a non-profit grantee broadcaster and allowed for its potential continuation after 1998 should the president approve of the work it had done. Finally, the Act authorized the provision of annual grants to RFE/RL and indicated that the duties and expenses of both RFE/RL and RFA would ideally be assumed by the private sector by the end of 1999. Scholar Monroe Price suggests this was an indicator of Congressional intent that surrogate broadcasters were not to become permanent, publicly supported operations.⁷² To date, however, both organizations remain fully funded by the U.S. government although, as represented in the BBG’s organizational chart, they are operated as private, non-federal, non-profit organizations.

The Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998

As suggested by historian Nicholas J. Cull, it was a belief by the Clinton Administration that the various roles of the U.S. Information Agency were so central to U.S. foreign policy efforts that they belonged within the Department of State itself that led to their incorporation into the Department as part of the Foreign

Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act.⁷³ The legislation dissolved the U.S. Information Agency and merged all of its operations, except for international broadcasting, into the Department of State. Although operational and strategic benefits were expected from this consolidation of public diplomacy efforts with the Department of State, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (FARRA)⁷⁴ was nevertheless primarily intended as a money-saving measure. As Cull has noted, this consolidation was a low-risk political move for Congress given the well-recognized dearth of a domestic constituency for foreign policy.⁷⁵

USIB was the only component of American public diplomacy not merged into the Department of State with FARRA. International broadcasting remained under the purview of the BBG as created in 1994, but the BBG itself emerged from the 1998 legislation as an independent agency.

As Cull writes “There was an irony in the victory of the free market system in the Cold War. Although the end of the Cold War certainly made the world safe for the free market, the battle had been fought by state-subsidized media going to places and showing things that afforded no short-term profit.”⁷⁶ The changes to the operational structure of U.S. international broadcasting as a result of FARRA demonstrated the consequences of this “free market” victory for international broadcasting. For USIB, the changed international environment ultimately led to a changed domestic structure responsible for its daily management and for justifying its continued existence. It was no longer afforded the protections of a larger executive branch institution and although in theory this might have been expected to further promote the broadcasters’ editorial independence, it has in practice led to increased vulnerability to Congressional intervention and to decreased daily oversight of operations.

A highly critical independent report published in 2007 noted that following post-Cold War budget cuts, the International Broadcasting Act’s consolidation of broadcast operations, and the disappearance of

USIA as its home institution, USIB and the organizational structure of its government home emerged as “an illogical patchwork, an archipelago of broadcasting organizations lacking clear individual missions and lacking a normal separation between management and oversight. The organizational chart of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) reveals the dimensions of this dysfunction.”⁷⁷ The following discussion highlights some of the consequences of the current arrangement.

Managing the Broadcasting Board of Governors

Although federally funded, the Broadcasting Board of Governors and its broadcasters are facing many of the same pressures as their brethren in private sector media organizations: Money is tight. Audience is hard to measure. The internet is disruptive. And strong top-level management is paramount. The first decade of the 21st century heightened awareness of the “interest one society has in the media space of others”⁷⁸ and the media space of others is exactly the place international broadcasting seeks to be.

The “illogical patchwork” of the BBG threatens the United States’ ability to manage, promote and grow its international broadcasting efforts and with that in mind, a series of recommendations for USIB were offered in a 2011 report from the Center for New American Security (CNAS) focused on U.S. public engagement abroad. It praised USIB’s “long and proud history of fulfilling its mandate to broadcast credible news journalism rather than acting as an overt instrument of American propaganda.”⁷⁹ But the report also recommended changing the structure surrounding USIB efforts without recreating an overall public diplomacy institution resembling the former USIA. A comprehensive, outside evaluation of the BBG, the CNAS report argued, should be undertaken to consider BBG strategy from the top down, assessing in particular how it aligns with U.S. national security objectives in both the short- and long-term; discerning how USIB can compete meaningfully in an age of information abundance; studying USIB’s proper role and mission relative to private and non-profit information providers

as well as allocation of resources for attaining those objectives; and determining how the agency can coordinate with other U.S. entities and the private sector without jeopardizing its mandate of independence.⁸⁰

Although it was not as comprehensive as the study recommended by the CNAS report, the BBG did in fact commission an outside review of the three grantee broadcasters. It specifically considered the prospects for merging USIB grantees Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks. The final report offered strong support for such consolidation.⁸¹ Other benefits of consolidation as highlighted in the outside review included significant cost savings from reduced duplication of administrative and other services among the three broadcasters. The report suggested, in a nod to the BBG’s political keepers, that if improved efficiencies and outcomes could be delivered without actually increasing the bottom line, Congress would likely be pleased. The financial and bureaucratic transparency resulting from consolidation would also be welcomed, the report concluded.

The BBG’s 2012-2016 strategic plan, released in late 2011, seems to tackle some of the issues raised both by the CNAS report and the aforementioned outside review.⁸² It declares the BBG’s intent to integrate the five broadcasters into a single entity while preserving the five identifiable broadcast brands. To meet these goals the strategic plan declares the BBG will establish a global news network, exploit high-tech content delivery strategies including satellite video delivery, and develop more effective means of disrupting internet blocking and other methods of censorship.⁸³ Summarizing the new approach, the plan says the BBG’s efforts are “predicated on the dual aims of fiscal and structural reform and assertive audience growth and mission fulfillment.”⁸⁴

But BBG leadership’s effort to begin implementing the plan in the form of its annual budget request met with resistance. The BBG’s proposed FY2013 budget⁸⁵ included cuts in both budget and staff for

the five broadcasters. In all, it called for a 4.2% cut from the previous year’s funding⁸⁶ as well as the reallocation of some resources to social media promotion and development of internet censorship circumvention technologies.⁸⁷ Response to the proposed budget was swift with current and former BBG employees and various commentators calling it destructive and a threat to the production of quality journalism.⁸⁸ Congress, too, was displeased. As a result, in May 2012, the House Appropriations Committee voted to give the BBG \$26.68 million more than it had requested. The Congressional support came with specific instructions about how to use it for promotion of broadcasters and the production of content directed to certain audiences worldwide.⁸⁹

Whether the proposed cuts would have been “eviscerating” as suggested in commentaries reacting to the budget proposal sidesteps the important question of the apparent permeability of the firewall that is supposed to prevent Congressional or executive branch interference with the operation of USIB. In this case, employees of the BBG welcomed Congressional intervention in BBG’s senior level decision-making. The question, however, is how welcome Congressional intervention might be in other circumstances when it takes decisions with which the BBG rank and file does not agree. Concerns such as this about the firewall and the thorny issue of micromanagement from individuals outside the BBG itself have in the past led one public diplomacy scholar to observe that the desire to protect USIB from undue political influence is important, but “The issue becomes more complicated... when the firewall is invoked to protect broadcasters from reasoned criticism, and decisions relating to management and budget priorities, languages, technologies, and types of broadcasting.”⁹⁰ What makes the FY2013 budget incident particularly noteworthy with respect to the firewall is the evidence of Congressional willingness to intervene when there is public disagreement between BBG management and its employees. This sets a precedent for undercutting BBG leadership on day-to-day decisions without attending to the broader, long-term issues concerned with the challenges of BBG’s dual mandate to serve as both a foreign policy tool and a journalism organization.

Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) once suggested that the Board’s firewall functions more frequently as a “football.”⁹¹ A January 2013 report from the Department of State’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) concluded that, since its founding, the Board “has been fully staffed for only 7 of its 17 years of existence.”⁹² Moreover, many board members serve well beyond their appointed three-year terms since members can serve until replaced.⁹³ The OIG report further notes that timely nomination and appointment of Board members is affected by White House delays in making appointments and Senate delays in confirming them.⁹⁴ Delays in filling vacancies on the Board offer just one example of how politics can interfere with the operations of the BBG.⁹⁵ In other words, permeability of the firewall is not the only concern on Capitol Hill.

Facing growing criticism from both within and without on a number of different issues, in June 2012 the board passed a resolution restricting public access to information about its deliberations, particularly with respect to legislative and budgetary matters.⁹⁶ The decision to muzzle public discussion was not well received⁹⁷ and led to increased critiques of a board already struggling to justify earlier decisions.⁹⁸ The BBG’s action to block public deliberation led one Congressman to describe the organization as “opaque in its decision making and incredibility [sic] tone deaf to Congressional priorities.”⁹⁹ The board’s resolution sought to assure members of Congress and others that the ban is standard among federal agencies and that it would have no effect on whistle-blowing protections for BBG employees.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, the ban was consistent with already existing perceptions about a lack of both transparency and judgment on the part of BBG leadership.

Speaking of the challenges facing the BBG, James Glassman, observed “The BBG has an impossible mission.”¹⁰¹ He pointed specifically to the BBG’s simultaneous role as both a foreign policy tool and a journalistic institution. Glassman suggested the solution might be to more fully incorporate the BBG into the American foreign policy apparatus so it could receive more specific foreign policy guidance. At the same time, he cautioned, this should not

extend to overt influence over journalistic content. In an ideal situation, Glassman noted, the BBG would be both better informed about where to invest limited international broadcasting resources and better protected from interested members of Congress who are loathe to see certain programs altered or eliminated.¹⁰²

Today, questions abound concerning the BBG’s performance as both a foreign policy tool and a journalism operation. Recent audience numbers released by the agency show a decline in audience for the five broadcasters, with estimated audience numbers dropping from 187 million in 2011 to 175 million in 2012.¹⁰³ But even the method of data collection for the numbers necessary to evaluate USIB effectiveness has been publicly debated. When the BBG contracted with Gallup to conduct international audience research for the purpose of evaluating audience numbers, BBG employees expressed concern that to cover the cost of the contract BBG management would need to downsize its workforce.¹⁰⁴

One of the problems with BBG performance, some observers suggest, is that appointed board members, together comprising the multi-headed top-level management for the agency and its broadcasters, rarely have either the foreign policy or journalism experience necessary to run such an operation effectively.¹⁰⁵ As an example, critics point to Dana Perino, former press secretary for President George W. Bush whose “foreign policy expertise was called into question when she admitted she had never heard of the Cuban Missile Crisis.”¹⁰⁶

Although the legislation authorizing creation of the Board of Governors requires that board members be American citizens selected from “among Americans distinguished in the fields of mass communications, print, broadcast media or foreign affairs,”¹⁰⁷ critics argue that appointments meeting these requirements have been the exception rather than the rule. Moreover, as noted elsewhere, “the appointments do not come quickly enough when vacancies occur.”¹⁰⁸ Issues concerning appointment of board members, extended vacancies on the board, the performance of the five broadcasters,

and the overall judgment of the organization’s leadership have led to increasingly public concerns about the performance of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, an agency more accustomed to maintaining a low profile in the policy environment.

It seems clear the status quo cannot hold, and while the BBG’s strategic plan calls for consolidation of USIB efforts, other options have circulated in the policy community. One of the proposed alternatives includes abolishing the BBG altogether and creating a hub for “strategic communication” that would coordinate the messages distributed by the Department of State, the Department of Defense and U.S. international broadcasters. In mentioning this option, however, international broadcast expert Kim Andrew Elliott cautions “The audiences for international broadcasting, seeking the antidote for the type of news that they get domestically, would almost immediately recognize coordinated news for what it is, and tune out.”¹⁰⁹ This, again, points to the “impossible mission” referred to by Glassman wherein the BBG is required to promote U.S. foreign policy while it practices credible journalism.¹¹⁰

Elliott suggests managing the BBG with a consortium comprised of leading American broadcast news organizations. He writes that under this arrangement, companies such as ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox News and CNN “would appoint an executive to a five-person board, which would, in turn, appoint the chief executive officer of the consolidated international broadcasting corporation and approve the CEO’s senior management selections.”¹¹¹ A benefit of this arrangement, Elliott argues, is that if Congress or the administration had concerns about content, they could approach the board rather than going directly to the broadcasters. He also notes the arrangement could lead to a more cooperative relationship between the private broadcasters and USIB, with the latter well positioned to share its international expertise with the private news organizations. He suggests that under such an arrangement, all the broadcasters “would enjoy the synergy now available to the BBC World Service and BBC domestic as they exchange coverage and resources.”¹¹²

This outcome is reminiscent of suggestions offered by others who already recommend that the American domestic journalism industry consider making better use of USIB content which is, according to its terms of use, already in the public domain.¹¹³ Any lingering barriers to this kind of cooperation have been removed with repeal of the domestic dissemination ban imposed by the Smith-Mundt Act.¹¹⁴ Providing more USIB content to stateside audiences also eliminates the irony that arose from a domestic ban on distribution of content designed, in part, to promote the benefits of a free press worldwide.¹¹⁵ Increased domestic distribution could also yield benefits in terms of accountability for content; creation of a domestic constituency in support of the broadcasters; and a likely increase in formal study of the broadcasters, their operations, their management and their place in the practice of American foreign policy.

Regardless of whether any sort of bureaucratic reorganization takes place, the Broadcasting Board of Governors and the work of its broadcasters offer a largely untapped source of research questions for both foreign policy and journalism researchers. Possible avenues for research include comparisons of the BBG to other nations' international broadcasting bureaucracies; comparisons of content produced by the different U.S. broadcasters looking for evidence of either redundancy or originality; evaluation of Voice of America or other USIB content on a given subject compared to the content produced by other nations' broadcasters; comparison of USIB content to content produced by private, American news organizations; study of correlations between U.S. foreign policy positions and the coverage among the five broadcasters; ethnographic studies involving employees of the BBG and examining issues including ethics, institutional culture, decision making and views about the role of media in society; case studies examining the firewall between USIB broadcasters and the legislative and executive branches; assessment of journalistic norms and routines as practiced at the various broadcasters; application of existing knowledge about media economics to the USIB operations managed by the BBG; and exploration of the possibility of repurposing USIB content in American domestic media.

Looking forward, more sustained attention to the BBG and the five broadcasters could serve the public good by shining light on a part of the American foreign policy apparatus that has rarely been the subject of formal academic study, detailed policy research, or comprehensive media attention. Results of such heightened attention may have the added benefit of bringing more effective leadership, increased transparency and better outcomes for all USIB stakeholders.

For now, the January 2013 report from the Department of State’s Inspector General and reactions to it are bringing in some of that attention. Offering several recommendations for improving overall governance of the BBG, the report also presents a highly critical view of a single board member. That member is never identified by name although enough information is provided to allow readers to discern the Governor’s identity. While the report agrees that there is a significant level of dysfunction in the operation of the BBG, it seems to attribute much of that dysfunction to what it frames as the disruptive behavior of a single Governor. Effectively absolving other Governors and the BBG’s full-time staff of responsibility for the organization’s difficulties, the OIG report declares that through the interviews conducted for the inspection it concluded “the Board’s current paralysis was the fault of a single Governor and that the reputations of other Board members should not be damaged because of his tactics.”¹¹⁶ It similarly passed no judgment on the BBG’s full-time staff in the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) (see Figure 1), the division responsible for strategic management of U.S. international broadcasting.

Speaking mostly in vague terms about other matters, the report has been roundly criticized as uneven, grossly unfair to the targeted Governor, neglectful of core issues concerning the future of USIB, and generally failing to address the types of systemic concerns mentioned elsewhere in this article.¹¹⁷ Unfortunately for the BBG, the 2013 OIG report is likely to be viewed in the long-term as a short-sighted, politically motivated attack on a Governor who appears to be taking his board appointment seriously. For the short-

term, however, the report serves only as further evidence of well-documented dysfunction associated with the management of U.S. international broadcasting.

Conclusions

Preceding discussion has considered the role of international broadcasting in American public diplomacy and the place of the Broadcasting Board of Governors therein. It has introduced the five broadcasters in the USIB stable and details about recent challenges facing each of them. It has also discussed the legislation governing USIB and leading to the current structure of the BBG, the broadcasters themselves, and the political and bureaucratic environments in which they operate. Emerging from those discussions one can see the outlines of difficulties associated with navigating the current management structure, balancing the relationship between management and funders in Congress, and ensuring the production of journalistic content that will help further American foreign policy priorities. While these difficulties may have long existed beneath the surface, they are increasingly public and require meaningful action to address – sooner rather than later.

Seventy years after VOA’s first transmission, international broadcasting still plays an important role in American public diplomacy efforts. But the USIB status quo cannot hold. Acknowledging the need for significant changes, the BBG has announced an effort to develop a legislative package tentatively called the International Broadcasting Innovation Act.¹¹⁸ Comments from senior BBG officials and board members suggest one of the primary goals of such legislation will be to create a statutory mechanism that authorizes creation of a single chief executive officer (CEO) for the Broadcasting Board of Governors. As was noted at the December 2012 board meeting, however, even the introduction of such legislation may be as long as a year away.¹¹⁹

Until legislation that creates a single executive for the BBG and then authorizes that executive to make decisions reaching across the five broadcasters and other BBG administrators, debate about

everything from content delivery to budget requests to implementation of the strategic plan risks looking like wasted energy. Indeed, barring passage of such transformative legislation, it seems unlikely that any decisions that manage to emerge from the current structure could do more than nibble around the edges of the “illogical patchwork” that is contemporary U.S. international broadcasting.

Of all the issues surrounding USIB, this is the one most worthy of prompt Congressional intervention. The status quo allows various interests to play against one another in an effort to influence broadcast efforts for personal, political or bureaucratic gain, but such intra-governmental infighting benefits no one, least of which the audiences that this American public diplomacy tool purports to serve or the country in whose name the tool is wielded. One hopes that 2013 will bring the introduction of legislation and with it Congressional hearings that will result in substantive oversight, transparent policy debate, establishment of meaningful performance indicators, and ultimately, a measure of order to the “illogical patchwork” that has been American international broadcasting in the post-Cold War era.

Endnotes

1. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “BBG Launches Russia Review, Recognizes Journalists and Departing Senior Managers, Adopts Travel Guidelines,” (14 December 2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/press-release/bbg-to-hold-final-2012-meeting-dec-14/>.
2. Broadcasting Board of Governors (2012). 2011 Annual report, bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2012/06/BBGAnnualReport_LoRes_Part1.pdf and bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2012/06/BBGAnnualReport_LoRes_Part2.pdf.
3. Mark Landler, “A New Voice of America for the Age of Twitter,” *The New York Times*, (7 June 2011), http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/08/world/08voice.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.
4. A likely reason for this lack of public awareness is the domestic dissemination ban imposed by the Smith-Mundt Act. However, with passage of the National Defense Authorization Act in late 2012 and signed by President Obama in early January, this ban has been relaxed. See Kim Andrew Elliott, “With Repeal of the Smith-Mundt Domestic Dissemination Ban, *De Jure* Catches Up with *De Facto*,” *Kim Andrew Elliott Reporting on International Broadcasting* (11 January 2013). <http://kimelli.nfshost.com/index.php?id=14070>. Implications of the change for the Broadcasting Board of Governors and the American public are discussed later in this article.
5. Susan Epstein, “U.S. Public Diplomacy: Background and the 9/11 Commission Recommendations.” Congressional Research Service. Washington, DC. RL32607, (4 February 2005), 12.
6. Rosaleen Smyth. “Mapping U.S. Public Diplomacy in the 21st Century.” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 2011 (55): 421–444.
7. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Broadcasting Board of Governors,” (2012), www.bbg.gov.
8. Monroe Price, “Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of International Broadcasting,” Annenberg School for Communication Departmental Papers (2003), http://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers/120/, 53.
9. Bruce Gregory, “Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication: Cultures, Firewalls, and Imported Norms.” Presented at the American Political Science Association Conference on International

- Communication and Conflict (2005), Washington, DC, www8.georgetown.edu/cct/apsa/papers/Gregory.pdf; See also Ted Lipien, “Interweaving of Public Diplomacy and U.S. International Broadcasting: A Historical Analysis,” *American Diplomacy Blog*, (2011), http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/item/2012/0106/ca/lipien_interweaving.html.
10. “Global News Channels: Everybody Wants One Now,” *The Economist* (30 November 2006), 70.
 11. Philip Seib, “Transnational Journalism, Public Diplomacy, and Virtual States.” *Journalism Studies* 11,5 (2010), 734–744, 736.
 12. Philip Seib, “Public Diplomacy and Journalism: Parallels, Ethical Issues, and Practical Concerns,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, 52,5 (2009), 772–786.
 13. Broadcasting Board of Governors (2012). “Broadcasting Board of Governors: Our Mission.” Available at: www.bbg.gov.
 14. Murendehle Mulheva Juwayeyi, “Establishment of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) as a Firewall for United States Government-Funded Nonmilitary International Broadcasters” (2010). Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia.
 15. James K. Glassman, “At Post: Interviews with Current and Former Members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors,” *PD Magazine* (Summer 2011), 37.
 16. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “BBG Measures Audience Growth in Key Markets,” (14 Nov 2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/press-release/bbg-measures-audience-growth-in-key-markets/>.
 17. BBG Annual Report, 2011.
 18. BBG Annual Report, 2001, 22.
 19. Voice of America, “VOA Charter,” (1976), <http://www.insidevoa.com/info/voa-charter/2322.html>.
 20. Nicholas J. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 14.
 21. Although official descriptions of the five broadcasters and their missions suggest a clear division of labor among them all, critics suggest that in practice there is little difference between the types of content appearing on VOA when compared to the other broadcasters. See for example, Alex Belida, “Blind Ambition,” *The Huffington*

- Post* (15 February 2012), http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alex-belida/blind-ambition_1_b_1279579.html. This concern about redundancy in language and geographic distribution of audiences for the five broadcasters is addressed further in a later section of this article.
22. USG Broadcasts BBG Watch, “Borsch,” *USG Broadcasts BBG Watch Blog* (4 February 2012), <http://www.usgbroadcasts.com/bbgwatch/2012/02/04/broadcasting-board-of-governors-borsch-the-federalist/>.
 23. Michele Kelemen, “Russia Accuses Voice of America of Fake Interview,” *National Public Radio* (20 February 2012), <http://www.npr.org/2012/02/20/147064987/russian-accuses-voice-of-america-of-fake-interview>.
 24. Judson Berger, “Lawmakers Scramble to Keep Voice of America On Air in China,” *Fox News*. (4 August 2011), <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/08/04/lawmakers-scramble-to-keep-voice-america-on-air-in-china/print>; See also Landler, 2011; Lipien, 2011.
 25. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,” (2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/broadcasters/rferl/>.
 26. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, “Then and Now: Free Media in Unfree Societies,” (2012), <http://www.rferl.org/info/history/133.html>.
 27. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,” (2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/broadcasters/rferl/>.
 28. *Ibid.*
 29. *Ibid.*
 30. Adam Kredo, “Notable & Quotable,” *The Wall Street Journal* (16 October 2012), A17. See also USG Broadcasts BBG Watch, “Russian and International Media on Radio Liberty Crisis, Dec. 20, 2012” *USG Broadcasts BBG Watch Blog*, (21 December 2012), <http://www.usgbroadcasts.com/bbgwatch/>.
 31. Ariel Cohen and Heller C. Dale, “How to Save Radio Liberty.” The Heritage Foundation, Issue Brief No. 3804 (13 December 2012), <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/12/how-to-save-radio-liberty>.
 32. USG Broadcasts BBG Watch, “BBG to Initiate Review of Radio Liberty Moscow Events,” USG Broadcasts BBG Watch (14 December 2012), <http://www.usgbroadcasts.com/bbgwatch/2012/12/14/bbg-to-initiate-review-of-radio-liberty-moscow-events/>.

33. John O’Sullivan, “Turmoil Over America’s Radio Voice in Russia,” *The Wall Street Journal* (30 December 2012), <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323320404578211454109934528.html>. See also Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Board Accepts Resignation of RFE/RL President and CEO Steven Koran, (31 December 2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/press-release/board-accepts-resignation-of-rferl-president-and-ceo-steven-korn/>.
34. BBG Annual Report, 2011, 38.
35. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Radio Free Asia,” (2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/broadcasters/rfa/>.
36. BBG Annual Report, 2011, 36.
37. “State Bill Reflects Changing Climate,” *CQ Almanac 1994*, 50th ed. CQ Press. Washington, D.C., (1995), 454–458.
38. Joseph Marks, “Agency Uses Circumvention Tools to Advance Democracy,” Nextgov (23 August 2011), <http://www.nextgov.com/technology-news/2011/08/agency-uses-circumvention-tools-to-advance-democracy/49648/>.
39. Congressional Research Service, “Bill Summary & Status, 112th Congress (2011-2012), H.R. 2899,” (2011).
40. Robert L. Daly (20 June 2012) “Testimony before the Subcommittee on Immigration Policy and Enforcement, Judiciary Committee, U.S. House of Representatives,” (20 June 2012), judiciary.house.gov/hearings/2012/Daly_06202012.pdf.
41. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Radio and TV Martí” (2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/broadcasters/ocb/>.
42. “Static from Radio Martí,” *Los Angeles Times*, (21 May 1985), http://articles.latimes.com/1985-05-21/local/me-7810_1_radio-marti.
43. BBG Annual Report, 2011, 32.
44. BBG Annual Report, 2011, 34.
45. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Our Broadcasters” (2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/broadcasters/>
46. Jonathan Broder, “The Public Evolution of a Broadcast Revolution,” *CQ Weekly In Focus*, (19 September 2011), <http://whatcounts.com/dm?id=C5E343C4F2C516EC54ACCF189446C74A823E6EEBBD8AB799>.
47. Broder, 19.

48. Paul Haven, “Cuba’s Cardinal Jaime Ortega Under Fire for Comments,” *The Huffington Post* (13 June 2012), http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/13/cubas-cardinal-under-fire_n_1593622.html.
49. William Booth, “U.S. Government’s Radio and TV Martí Call Cuba’s Cardinal Jaime Ortega a Lackey,” *The Washington Post* (5 May 2012), http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-05-05/world/35456652_1_havana-church-cuban-cardinal-jaime-ortega-dissidents.
50. James P. McGovern; Sam Farr; Janice C. Schakowsky; James P. Moran and Rosa L. DeLauro, “Letter to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton Concerning Radio and Television Martí Editorial,” (8 May 2012), <http://www.democracyinamericas.org/pdfs/ortegaletter.pdf>.
51. Haven, “Cuba’s Cardinal Jaime Ortega.”
52. Seib, “Transnational Journalism”, 734.
53. BGG, “Our Broadcasters.”
54. Pew Research Center, “International Surveys: What We Are Finding,” (29 April 2002), <http://www.people-press.org/2002/04/29/international-surveys-what-we-are-finding/>.
55. Glenn Kessler, “The Role of Radio Sawa in Mideast Questioned,” *The Washington Post*, (13 October 2004), A12.
56. Craig Whitlock, “U.S. Network Falts in Mideast Mission,” *The Washington Post*, (23 June 2008), <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/06/22/AR2008062201228.html>.
57. Elle McCarthy, “Va.-Based, U.S.-Financed Arabic Channel Finds Its Voice,” *The Washington Post* (15 October 2004), <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A33564-2004Oct14.html>.
58. Whitlock, “U.S. Network Falts.”
59. Kessler, “The Role of Radio Sawa in Mideast Questioned.”
60. Dafna Linzer, “Lost in Translation: Alhurra—America’s Troubled Effort to Win Middle East Hearts and Minds,” *ProPublica*, (22 June 2008), <http://www.propublica.org/article/alhurra-middle-east-hearts-and-minds-622>.
61. Whitlock, “U.S. Network Falts.”
62. Walter Isaacson quoted in Broder, “The Public Evolution.”
63. Public Law 80–402.
64. Emily T. Metzgar, “Public Diplomacy, Smith-Mundt and the American Public,” *Communication Law and Policy*, 17, 1 (2012), 67–101.

65. “Voice of America,” *CQ Almanac 1948*, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1948), 195–197.
66. Metzgar, “Public Diplomacy, Smith-Mundt and the American Public.”
67. Ibid. See also Emily T. Metzgar, “Dial Back the Outrage,” *Columbia Journalism Review*. (25 May 2012), http://www.cjr.org/behind_the_news/dial_back_the_outrage.php?page=all.
68. Matt Armstrong, “When Do We Start Honest Debate over the Smith-Mundt Act?” *Mountainrunner Blog* (31 May 2012), <http://mountainrunner.us/2012/05/start-honest-debate-smith-mundt-modernization-act/#.UNeS9LZ6Ow4>. See Metzgar, “Dial Back the Outrage” and R.S. Zaharna, “The Ironies of Social Media in Public Diplomacy,” University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy Blog (17 May 2012), http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/index.php/newswire/cpdblog_detail/the_ironies_of_social_media_in_public_diplomacy1/.
69. Public Law 103-236.
70. Ibid.
71. BBG Annual Report, 2011, 16.
72. Price, “Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of International Broadcasting,” 60.
73. Nicholas J. Cull, *The Decline and Fall of the United States Information Agency*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 123.
74. Public Law 105–277.
75. Cull, *The Cold War and the U.S. Information Agency*. See also Cull, *The Decline and Fall of the United States Information Agency*.
76. Cull, *The Cold War and the U.S. Information Agency*, 483.
77. McCormick Tribune Foundation, “Understanding the Mission of U.S. International Broadcasting” (2007), <http://documents.mccormickfoundation.org/publications/broadcasting07.pdf>, 23.
78. Price, “Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of International Broadcasting,” 84.
79. Kristin M. Lord and Marc Lynch, “America’s Extended Hand: Assessing the Obama Administration’s Global Engagement Strategy,” Center for New American Security. Washington, DC. (2010), <http://www.cnas.org/node/448545>.
80. Ibid, 47–49.

81. Deloitte, “Broadcasting Board of Governors: Grantee Merger Assessment,” (10 November 2011), <http://www.bbgstrategy.com/2011/11/bbg-releases-deloitte-summary-on-consolidation/>, 1.
82. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Impact through Innovation and Integration: BBG Strategic Plan 2012-2016,” (2012), <http://www.bbgstrategy.com/2012/02/bbg-strategic-plan-2012-2016-full-text/>.
83. *Ibid.*, i.
84. *Ibid.*
85. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Budget Request Reflects Long-Term Strategy, Changing Media Environment,” (13 February 2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/press-release/budget-request-reflects-long-term-strategy-changing-media-environment/>.
86. Randy J. Stine, “BBG’s 2013 Budget Proposals Outlined,” *Radio World*, (16 February 2012), <http://www.rwonline.com/article/bbg%E2%80%99s--budget-proposals-outlined/211883>.
87. Randy J. Stine, “U.S. International Broadcasting Budget Would Shrink,” *Radio World*, (14 February 2012), <http://www.radioworld.com/article/us-international-broadcasting-budget-would-shrink/211813>.
88. Belida,” Blind Ambition.” Alan Heil as quoted in Belida, “Blind Ambition.” See also Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, “CUSIB Opposes BBG’s FY2013 Budget Proposal”, (17 February 2012), <http://www.cusib.org/cusib/2012/02/17/cusib-opposes-bbgs-fy2013-budget-proposal/> See also Helle C. Dale, (15 May 2012). “Congress Moves to Protect International Broadcasting,” The Foundry Blog, The Heritage Foundation (15 May 2012), <http://blog.heritage.org/2012/05/15/congress-moves-to-protect-international-broadcasting/>.
89. Dale, “Congress Moves to Protect International Broadcasting.”
90. Gregory, 16.
91. Richard G. Lugar, “Keeping America Connected: Challenges for the BBG,” *Foreign Service Journal*, 87,10, (2010), 15–21.
92. Office of Inspector General, United States Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors,” ISP-IB-13-07, (January 2013) oig.state.gov/documents/organization/203193.pdf, 8.
93. *Ibid.*

94. Ibid.
95. Ibid, 14.
96. USG Broadcasts BBG Watch, “Broadcasting Board of Governors Passes Resolution to Limit Public Access to Information,” (8 June 2012), USG Broadcasts BBG Watch Blog. <http://www.usgbroadcasts.com/bbgwatch/2012/06/08/broadcasting-board-of-governors-passes-resolution-to-limit-public-access-to-information/>.
97. Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, “CUSIB Calls Upon the BBG to Restore Transparency,” (22 June 2012), <http://www.cusib.org/cusib/2012/06/22/cusib-calls-upon-the-bbg-to-restore-transparency/>.
98. Joseph A. Bosco, “Why Voice of America is Losing to Voice of Communist China – at Home and Abroad,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, (27 April 2012), <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2012/0427/Why-Voice-of-America-is-losing-to-voice-of-communist-China-at-home-and-abroad>.
99. USG Broadcasts BBG Watch, “Rep Rohrabacher Blasts Broadcasting Board of Governors for Ignoring Congress on China Strategy, BBG Officials Call His Criticism ‘Inaccurate,’” (16 May 2012), <http://www.usgbroadcasts.com/bbgwatch/2012/05/16/rep-rohrabacher-blasts-broadcasting-board-of-governors-for-ignoring-congress-on-china-strategy-bbg-officials-call-his-criticism-inaccurate>.
100. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Resolution: Policy Regarding Non-Disclosure of Deliberative Information,” (7 June 2012), www.bbg.gov/wp-content/media/12/06/Non-DisclosureResolution.pdf.
101. “Public Diplomacy in the Next Four Years: A Post-Election Look at American Strategies and Priorities for Engaging with the World”, Transcript of proceedings. Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication, The George Washington University, (14 November 2012), http://www.gwu.edu/~ipdgc/events/2012_11_13_PostElectionPD/PDN4Y%20Transcript.cfm.
102. Ibid.
103. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “BBG Measures Audience Growth in Key Markets.”
104. USG Broadcasts BBG Watch, “BBG Awarded 50 Million Dollar Contract to Gallup While Planning to Terminate Broadcasts and Fire over 200 Journalists,” (19 February 2012), <http://www.usgbroadcasts.com/bbgwatch/2012/02/19/bbg-awarded-50-million-dollar-contract-to-gallup-while-planning-to-terminate-broadcasts-and-fire-over-200-journalists/>.

- com/bbgwatch/2012/02/19/bbg-awarded-50-million-dollar-contract-to-gallup-while-planning-to-terminate-broadcasts-and-fire-over-200-journalists/.
105. Josh Rogin, “Chaos at the Broadcasting Board of Governors,” *Foreign Policy* (30 April 2010), http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/04/30/chaos_at_the_broadcasting_board_of_governors.
 106. Peter Baker, “Bush Knows Well the Hazards of the Trail,” *The Washington Post* (10 December 2007), <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/09/AR2007120901336.html>.
 107. Public Law 103–236.
 108. Comm. on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, “U.S. International Broadcasting:—Is Anybody Listening?—Keeping the U.S. Connected,” 3-4 (Comm. Print 2010). See also Office of Inspector General, “Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.”
 109. Kim Andrew Elliott, “America Calling: A 21st Century Model,” *Foreign Service Journal*, 87, 10 (2010), 31-37, 34.
 110. “Public Diplomacy in the Next Four Years.”
 111. Elliott, “America Calling,” 35-36.
 112. *Ibid.*
 113. Metzgar, “Public Diplomacy, Smith-Mundt and the American Public.” Metzgar, “Dial Back the Outrage.” See also Shawn Powers, “U.S. International Broadcasting: An Untapped Resource for Domestic and Ethnic News Organizations” in Robert W. McChesney & Victor Pickard (eds.), *Will the Last Reporter Please Turn Out the Lights: The Collapse of Journalism and What Can Be Done to Fix It*. (New York: The New Press, 2011), 138–150.
 114. Elliott, “With Repeal of the Smith-Mundt Domestic Dissemination Ban, *De Jure* Catches Up with *De Facto*.”
 115. Metzgar, “Dial Back the Outrage.”
 116. Office of Inspector General, “Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors,” 11.
 117. See for example American Federation of Government Employees, “Hatchet Job,” *AFGE Local 1812*, (no date), <http://laborweb.afge.org/sites/bbg/11812/index.cfm?action=article&articleID=9ee48c2b-8f22-4372-b183-7decf38ff8ac>. See also BBG Watch, “Who Will Inspect the Inspectors?—Flawed OIG Inspections at RFE/RL and

- BBG Miss Serious Problems,” *USG Broadcasts BBG Watch Blog*, (20 January 2013), <http://www.usgbroadcasts.com/bbgwatch/2013/01/20/who-will-inspect-the-inspectors-flawed-oig-inspections-at-rferl-and-bbg-miss-serious-problems/>. See also Kim Andrew Elliott, “OIG Cites Vacancies and Absenteeism on the Broadcasting Board of Governors. Solution: More Boards,” *Kim Andrew Elliott Reporting on International Broadcasting*, (21 January 2013), <http://kimelli.nfshost.com/index.php?id=14090>. See also Jonathan Marks, “US International Broadcasting in Dysfunctional Tailspin,” *Critical Distance Weblog*, (21 January 2013), <http://criticaldistance.blogspot.com/2013/01/us-international-broadcasting-in.html>. See also James Warren, “Board Running Voice of America, Radio Free Europe is Condemned in Hard-Hitting Probe,” *NY Daily News*, (20 January 2013), <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/board-running-voice-america-condemned-article-1.1243471>.
118. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “BBG Calls for Agency Restructuring,” (18 January 2012), <http://www.bbg.gov/uncategorized/bbg-calls-for-agency-restructuring/>.
119. Broadcasting Board of Governors, “BBG Launches Russia Review.”

Author Biography

Emily T. Metzgar is assistant professor at Indiana University's School of Journalism. Her research focuses on public diplomacy, political communication and social media. She received her PhD from Louisiana State University's Manship School of Mass Communication in 2008.

Professor Metzgar has a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and a master's degree from The George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs. She is a former U.S. diplomat with additional professional experience at the National Defense University and the United States Institute of Peace. She also has extensive writing and editing experience. In addition to academic and professional publications, she served as a community columnist for the *Shreveport (LA) Times* from 2003 through 2007.

Dr. Metzgar's work has appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Los Angeles Times* and *International Herald Tribune*. She is an alumna of the Council for a Better Louisiana's Leadership Louisiana program and has been recognized as a Graduate Fellow of the American Academy of Political and Social Science and as a Fellow for the Society for New Communications Research. She is a 2009 graduate of the University of Southern California's Summer Institute in Public Diplomacy, contributes posts to the CPD Blog and serves as a CPD Contribution Scholar for the CPD research project, International Broadcasting in the Social Media Era.

Other Papers in the CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy Series

All papers in the CPD Perspectives series are available for free on the Center's website (www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org). To purchase any of the publications below in hard copy, please contact cpd@usc.edu.

- 2012/10 Engaging India: Public Diplomacy and Indo-American Relations to 1957
by Sarah Ellen Graham
- 2012/9 Silicon Valley's Foreign Policy
by Ernest J. Wilson III
- 2012/8 Buddhist Diplomacy: History and Status Quo
by Juyan Zhang
- 2012/7 Public Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution:
Russia, Georgia and the EU in Abkhazia and South Ossetia
by Iskra Kirova
- 2012/6 Practicing Successful Twitter Public Diplomacy: A Model and Case Study of U.S. Efforts in Venezuela
by Erika A. Yepsen
- 2012/5 Media Diplomacy and U.S.-China Military-to-Military Cooperation
by Thomas A. Hollihan and Zhan Zhang
- 2012/4 The Cultural Awakening in Public Diplomacy
by R.S. Zaharna
- 2012/3 Promoting Japan: One JET at a Time
by Emily T. Metzgar
- 2012/2 Experiencing Nation Brands: A Comparative Analysis of Eight National Pavilions at Expo Shanghai in 2010
by Jian Wang and Shaojing Sun

- 2012/1 Hizbullah's Image Management Strategy
by Lina Khatib
- 2011/11 Public Diplomacy from Below:
The 2008 "Pro-China " Demonstrations in Europe and North America
by Barry Sautman and Li Ying
- 2011/10 Campaigning for a Seat on the UN Security Council
by Caitlin Byrne
- 2011/9 A Resource Guide to Public Diplomacy Evaluation
by Robert Banks
- 2011/8 Essays on Faith Diplomacy
Edited by Naomi Leight
- 2011/7 A Strategic Approach to U.S. Diplomacy
by Barry A. Sanders
- 2011/6 U.S. Public Diplomacy in a Post-9/11 World:
From Messaging to Mutuality
by Kathy R. Fitzpatrick
- 2011/5 The Hard Truth About Soft Power
by Markos Kounalakis and Andras Simonyi
- 2011/4 Challenges for Switzerland's Public Diplomacy:
Referendum on Banning Minarets
by Johannes Matyassy and Seraina Flury
- 2011/3 Public Diplomacy of Kosovo: Status Quo, Challenges and Options
by Martin Wählisch and Behar Xharra
- 2011/2 Public Diplomacy, New Media, and Counterterrorism
by Philip Seib

- 2011/1 The Power of the European Union in Global Governance:
A Proposal for a New Public Diplomacy
El poder de la Unión Europea en el gobierno global:
Propuesta para una nueva diplomacia pública
by Teresa La Porte
- 2010/4 Spectacle in Copenhagen: Public Diplomacy on Parade
by Donna Marie Oglesby
- 2010/3 U.S. Public Diplomacy's Neglected Domestic Mandate
by Kathy R. Fitzpatrick
- 2010/2 Mapping the Great Beyond: Identifying Meaningful Networks
in Public Diplomacy
by Ali Fisher
- 2010/1 Moscow '59: The "Sokolniki Summit" Revisited
by Andrew Wulf
- 2009/3 The Kosovo Conflict: U.S. Diplomacy and Western Public Opinion
by Mark Smith
- 2009/2 Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past
by Nicholas J. Cull
- 2009/1 America's New Approach to Africa: AFRICOM and Public Diplomacy
by Philip Seib

Public Diplomacy

La Diplomatie Publique

الدبلوماسية العامة

Общественная дипломатия

Publieksdiplomatie

PUBLICZNA DYPLMACJA

הסברה

Diplomacia Pública

公共外交

Δημόσια Διπλωματία

Публична дипломация



**Public Diplomacy**
at the Annenberg School
USC Center on