

Cultural Diplomacy The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy



Report of the Advisory Committee on
Cultural Diplomacy

U.S. Department of State



September 2005

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Executive Summary

Cultural diplomacy is the linchpin of public diplomacy; for it is in cultural activities that a nation's idea of itself is best represented. And cultural diplomacy can enhance our national security in subtle, wide-ranging, and sustainable ways. Indeed history may record that America's cultural riches played no less a role than military action in shaping our international leadership, including the war on terror. For the values embedded in our artistic and intellectual traditions form a bulwark against the forces of darkness.

The ideals of the Founding Fathers, enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and the Bill of Rights, take on new life in the vibrant traditions of American art, dance, film, jazz, and literature, which continue to inspire people the world over despite our political differences. But in the wake of the invasion of Iraq, the prisoner abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib, and the controversy over the handling of detainees at Bagram and Guantánamo Bay, America is viewed in much of the world less as a beacon of hope than as a dangerous force to be countered. This view diminishes our ability to champion freedom, democracy, and individual dignity—ideas that continue to fuel hope for oppressed peoples everywhere. The erosion of our trust and credibility within the international community must be reversed if we hope to use more than our military and economic might in the shaping of world opinion. Culture matters.

Cultural diplomacy reveals the soul of a nation, which may explain its complicated history in American political life: when our nation is at war, every tool in the diplomatic kit bag is employed, including the promotion of cultural activities. But when peace returns, culture gets short shrift, because of our traditional lack of public support for the arts. Now that we are at war again, interest in cultural diplomacy is on the rise. Perhaps this time we can create enduring structures within which to practice effective cultural diplomacy and articulate a sustaining vision of the role that culture can play in enhancing the security of this country. And if, as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice suggests, America's involvement in Iraq requires "a generational commitment," then our cultural diplomacy efforts require a similar commitment of funds, expertise, courage, and time.

Cultural diplomacy:

- Helps create "a foundation of trust" with other peoples, which policy makers can build on to reach political, economic, and military agreements;
- Encourages other peoples to give the United States the benefit of the doubt on specific policy issues or requests for collaboration, since there is a presumption of shared interests;
- Demonstrates our values, and our interest in values, and combats the popular notion that Americans are shallow, violent, and godless;
- Affirms that we have such values as family, faith, and the desire for education in common with others;
- Creates relationships with peoples, which endure beyond changes in government;

- Can reach influential members of foreign societies, who cannot be reached through traditional embassy functions;
- Provides a positive agenda for cooperation in spite of policy differences;
- Creates a neutral platform for people-to-people contact;
- Serves as a flexible, universally acceptable vehicle for rapprochement with countries where diplomatic relations have been strained or are absent;
- Is uniquely able to reach out to young people, to non-elites, to broad audiences with a much reduced language barrier;
- Fosters the growth of civil society;
- Educates Americans on the values and sensitivities of other societies, helping us to avoid gaffes and missteps;
- Counterbalances misunderstanding, hatred, and terrorism;
- Can leaven foreign internal cultural debates on the side of openness and tolerance.

The Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy urges the Secretary of State to consider the following recommendations:

- To increase funding and staffing for cultural diplomacy and, in a larger sense, for public diplomacy.
- To provide advanced training and professional development opportunities for FSOs, who are public affairs officers and have responsibility for public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy throughout their careers, with particular attention to research, polling, and the uses of new media.
- To create an independent clearinghouse, in the manner of the British Council, to promote the national interest; support missions in their efforts to bring the best artists, writers, and other cultural figures to their audiences; develop public-private partnerships; and raise funds, with separate housing from the embassies so that cultural events can attract wider audiences.
- To set aside funds for translation projects, into and out of English, of the most important literary, intellectual, philosophical, political, and spiritual works from this and other countries.
- To streamline visa issues, particularly for international students.
- To implement the recommendations issued by the Center for Arts and Culture in *Cultural Diplomacy: Recommendations and Research* (www.culturalpolicy.org).
- To revamp Al Hurra, the Arabic-language television station, in keeping with the highest traditions of American broadcasting.
- To expand international cultural exchange programs, inviting more Arab and Muslim artists, performers, and writers to the United States, and sending their American counterparts to the Islamic world.

Effective cultural diplomacy requires a long-term commitment to winning the hearts and minds of reasonable people everywhere. Now is the time to create a cultural diplomacy infrastructure and policy for the twenty-first century.

I

Introduction

History may record that America's cultural riches played no less a role than military action in shaping our international leadership, including the war on terror. For the values embedded in our artistic and intellectual traditions form a bulwark against the forces of darkness. And cultural diplomacy, which presents the best of what American artists, performers, and thinkers have to offer, can enhance our national security in subtle, wide-ranging, and sustainable ways. But limited resources and a lack of government-wide focus restrict our efforts in the battle for the hearts and minds of people everywhere.

It is time for change: time to articulate a vision of cultural diplomacy congruent with our position as what former Secretary of State Madeline Albright called "the indispensable nation," time to show how the values we preach in the political arena are embodied in our culture—and time to listen to what the cultures of the rest of world are saying about us.

"There's a worldwide debate about the relationship between Islam and the West," said an American official, "and we don't have a seat at that table."

Indeed, the Defense Science Board on Strategic Communications issued a report, in September 2004, asserting that "[t]he contest of ideas [within Islam] is taking place not just in Arab and other Islamic countries but in the cities and villages of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Western Hemisphere." Further, "U.S. policies on Israeli-Palestinian issues and Iraq in 2003-2004 have damaged America's credibility and power to persuade."¹

Cultural diplomacy is a means by which we may engage and influence that debate.

The stakes have never been higher. Anecdotal evidence and opinion surveys conducted by a range of organizations, including Zogby International, the Pew Research Center, and Gallup (CNN/USA Today), testify to widespread hostility toward the United States and its policies, particularly in the wake of the war in Iraq. This is brought into sharpest relief in the Arab/Muslim world, where large majorities in Egypt, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia, for example, view George W. Bush as a greater threat to the world order than Osama bin Laden; favorability ratings in Turkey, Pakistan, and Jordan steadily declined in 2002, 2003, and 2004; a poll taken in ten countries in October 2004—in Canada, France, Britain, Spain, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Mexico, Israel, and Russia: some of our closest allies—revealed the same trend. And while recent polling suggests that American relief efforts after the tsunami in Southeast Asia, in December 2004, have at least temporarily mitigated the damage to our international standing, notably in the world's most populous Muslim nation, Indonesia, the fact remains that for much of the rest of the world the United States has lost its luster. What happened?

¹ *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Washington, D.C.: September 2004.

It is an axiom of international relations that the more power a country acquires, the more suspicions it provokes when it uses that power. Certainly this was the case with the U.S.-led invasion and occupation of Iraq, when large majorities of people around the world came to believe that the United States will impose its will where- and whenever it chooses, without what Thomas Jefferson called “a decent respect to the opinions of mankind.” But a country can accumulate so much power that in the end it will have no friends at all. And history demonstrates that friendless nations fall to ruin.

Cultural diplomacy, which has been defined as “the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding,”² is the linchpin of public diplomacy; for it is in cultural activities that a nation’s idea of itself is best represented. Indeed the ideals of the Founding Fathers, enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and the Bill of Rights, take on new life in the vibrant traditions of American art, dance, film, jazz, and literature, which continue to inspire people the world over despite our political differences; the glories of our higher educational system, which remains the envy of the world despite the difficulties that foreign students face in securing visas to matriculate in this country, testify to the ingenuity, support (public and private), and solid intellectual foundations integral to the American experiment in democracy.

What people throughout the world love about American culture—the idea of America, if you will—is the sense of freedom coursing through the writings of Emerson and Thoreau, of Hemingway and Fitzgerald; the music of Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, and John Coltrane; the paintings of Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Robert Motherwell; the choreography of Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, and Paul Taylor; the films of Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese. But as an American official said of the government’s declining support for cultural programming: “It’s like sucking the air out of a bell jar: if there’s no other way to engage us except in political terms, then we lose.”

With the end of the Cold War and the subsequent abolishment of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) in 1999, official American cultural presence abroad was significantly reduced; cultural programming was slashed even before the dispersal of USIA personnel through the U.S. Department of State (DOS) destroyed the institutional memory necessary for the maintenance of cultural ties. What remains is an ad hoc congeries of programs, administered largely through the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA) at the DOS, with a reduced budget and staff, a diminished position in the hierarchy of diplomatic values, and a vision of cultural diplomacy incommensurate with American ideals and foreign policy objectives.

Cultural diplomacy is a two-way street: for every foreign artist inspired by an American work of art, there is an American waiting to be touched by the creative wonders of other traditions. Culture spreads from individual to individual, often by subterranean means; in exchange programs like Fulbright, Humphrey, and Muskie, in person-to-person contacts

² Milton C. Cummings, Jr. *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey*, Washington, D.C: Center for Arts and Culture, 2003, 1.

made possible by international visitor and student exchange programs, ideas that we hold dear—of family, education, and faith—cross borders, creating new ways of thinking.

Listening is central to this effort. To practice effective cultural diplomacy, we must first listen to our counterparts in other lands, seeking common ground with curators and writers, filmmakers and theater directors, choreographers and educators—that is, with those who are engaged in exploring the universal values of truth and freedom. The quest for meaning is shared by everyone, and every culture has its own way of seeking to understand our walk in the sun. We must not imagine that our attempts to describe reality hold for everyone. Indeed the history of art and literature is an essay in cross-fertilization. And American culture gains from its dialogue with the artistic and intellectual riches of other cultures. American artists who travel abroad, in official and unofficial capacities, are cultural diplomats who make incalculable contributions to the body politic. As Joan Channick notes: “Artists engage in cross-cultural exchange not to proselytize about their own values but rather to understand different cultural traditions, to find new sources of imaginative inspiration, to discover new methods and ways of working and to exchange ideas with people whose worldviews differ from their own. They want to be influenced rather than to influence.”³ Which is to say: they listen. And so they offset the impression that America is a monolithic society defined solely by its foreign policy.

For what can be heard around the world, in the wake of the invasion of Iraq, the prisoner abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib, and the controversy over the handling of detainees at Bagram and Guantánamo Bay, is that America is less a beacon of hope than a dangerous force to be countered. This assertion, repeated in newspaper columns, on radio and television broadcasts, and via the Internet, diminishes our ability to champion freedom, democracy, and individual dignity—ideas that continue to fuel hope for oppressed peoples everywhere. The erosion of our trust and credibility within the international community must be reversed if we hope to use more than our military and economic might in the shaping of world opinion. Culture matters.

Thus, if, as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice suggests, America’s involvement in Iraq will require “a generational commitment,” then our cultural diplomacy efforts require a similar commitment of funds, expertise, courage, and time.

This report synthesizes the findings of several academic studies, independent task forces, and various commissions and committees on public and cultural diplomacy; incorporates insights gleaned by this committee on a fact-finding mission to Oman, Egypt, and the United Kingdom, in the summer of 2004, as well as from separate DOS-sponsored visits by one committee member to Greece, Malaysia, and Norway; interviews with artists, choreographers, cultural activists, educators, film makers, theater directors, and writers in this country and abroad; discussions with American diplomats, program officers at the DOS, and a range of foreign officials, journalists, and experts. A sense of crisis was everywhere apparent, first in the growing perception of the United States as a hostile force, then in the scale of the diplomatic problem that must be solved: bridges rebuilt and new links forged. Put simply, we have lost the goodwill of the world, without which it

³ Joan Channick, “The Artist as Cultural Diplomat.” *American Theater Magazine*, May/June 2005.

becomes ever more difficult to execute foreign policy. “We Who Loved America,” the title of a bitter panel discussion at an international literary festival in Molde, Norway, has in the last three years become a common sentiment around the world. The question, now, is how to regain that love, which was rooted in the promise of America.

Authorized by Congress and PL 107-228, the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy (ACCD) was appointed in March 2004. It was charged with advising the Secretary of State on programs and policies to advance the use of cultural diplomacy in U.S. foreign policy, paying particular attention to: 1) increasing the presentation abroad of America’s finest creative, visual, and performing artists; and 2) developing strategies for increasing public-private sector partnerships to sponsor cultural exchange programs that promote the national interest of the United States.

II

Background

If diplomacy, as former Secretary of State George P. Shultz suggests, can be likened to gardening—“You get the weeds out when they are small. You also build confidence and understanding. Then, when a crisis arises, you have a solid base from which to work”⁴—then the role of cultural diplomacy is to plant seeds—ideas and ideals; aesthetic strategies and devices; philosophical and political arguments; spiritual perceptions; ways of looking at the world—which may flourish in foreign soils. Cultural diplomacy reveals the soul of a nation, which may explain its complicated history in American political life: when our nation is at war, every tool in the diplomatic kit bag is employed, including the promotion of cultural activities. But when peace returns, culture gets short shrift, because of our traditional lack of public support for the arts. Now that we are at war again, interest in cultural diplomacy is on the rise. Perhaps this time we can create enduring structures within which to practice effective cultural diplomacy and articulate a sustaining vision of the role that culture can play in enhancing the security of this country.

The first efforts in U.S. cultural diplomacy date from World War I, though it was not until 1938, in the face of Nazi Germany’s cultural activities in Latin America, that a division of cultural relations was created in the DOS. The government agreed to support exchange programs for students and artists under the 1936 Convention for the Promotion of Inter-American Cultural Relations—the model for the numerous exchange programs integral to public diplomacy during the Cold War.

It is worth recalling some of the language included in the founding legislation of U.S. cultural diplomacy—the Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948—and in the program policies for one of the most successful Cold War initiatives:

The purpose and objectives of this program are “to enable the Government of the United States to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.” Among the means to be used in achieving these objectives is the international exchange of persons, knowledge, and skills.

International exchange of persons and projects constitute an integral and essential technique in attaining the general objectives of this educational exchange program. Persons participating in such projects carry to other countries, and bring back to their own, information, knowledge, and attitudes which through personal experience and personal influence promote a better understanding of the United States abroad and increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States

⁴ George P. Schultz, “Diplomacy in the Information Age” Paper presented at the Conference on Virtual Diplomacy, U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C., April 1, 1997, 9.

and the people of other countries. These programs play a leading and direct, personalized role in contributing to the exchange of technical services, of knowledge and skills, and of information regarding developments in education, the arts, and sciences.⁵

The spread of American knowledge, skills, and ideals—our success in the war of ideas with the Soviet Union—may be traced to the vitality of these programs. The late Anwar Sadat, Prime Minister Tony Blair, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Afghan President Harmid Karzai—these are some of the many world leaders who benefited from international visitor programs. Meantime, countless people were introduced to our cultural traditions at American libraries and information centers, which after 1953 were administered by the USIA. The Central Intelligence Agency even entered the cultural fray in the 1950s, covertly supporting exhibitions of American art, performing arts tours, and the publication of *Encounter*, one of the more dynamic journals in its time—a practice that was stopped in 1967.

But after the Cold War, when cultural diplomacy ceased to be a priority, funding for its programs fell dramatically. “Since 1993, budgets have fallen by nearly 30%, staff has been cut by about 30% overseas and 20% in the U.S., and dozens of cultural centers, libraries and branch posts have been closed,”⁶ Juliet Antunes Sablosky reports. The abolishment of the USIA in 1999 marked the end of a formal cultural diplomacy policy—and the beginning of a retreat from the war of ideas raging around the world. For example, “between 1995 and 2001 the number of exchange participants in ECA programs fell from about 45,000 to 29,000.”⁷ And the waning of American cultural presence abroad left a gap in public perception eagerly filled by those with political agendas diametrically at odds with ours—particularly extremists in the Islamic world. In *The First Resort of Kings*, a history of American cultural diplomacy, Richard T. Arndt argues that “the sharp rise in foreign non-understanding” is a function of this policy. “Yet few have suggested that a crippled cultural diplomacy might have anything to do with either cause or cure. Cultural diplomacy’s decline has thus passed unnoticed, leaving a nation baffled by its apparent defenselessness against the cultural onslaught of an enraged Islamic fragment.”⁸

Moreover, tightening visa restrictions since the events of 9/11 threatens our most successful, albeit underrated, exchange program—access to higher education and exposure to America. If in the 1990s the number of foreign students at American universities increased by 10 percent a year, restrictive entry requirements reduced that increase to less than 1 percent in 2002 and 2003; the difficulties of securing visas are prompting more foreign students to attend universities in Australia and the European Union. “In an effort to exclude a dangerous few,” Joseph S. Nye, Jr. writes, “we are

⁵ *Inter-American Beginnings of U.S. Cultural Diplomacy, 1936-1948*, by J. Manuel Espinosa. Washington, D.C.: Department of State, 1975, 342.

⁶ *Recent Trends in Department of State Support for Cultural Diplomacy: 1993-2002*, by Juliet Antunes Sablosky. Washington, D.C.: Center for Arts and Culture, 2003, 1.

⁷ Cummings, op cit, 9.

⁸ *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, by Richard T. Arndt. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2005, xxi.

keeping out the helpful many.”⁹ Indeed foreign students not only fill important gaps in science and engineering, teaching undergraduates, for example, and embarking upon cutting-edge research (the National Science Board reports that 38 percent of the doctorates in our engineering and scientific workforce are foreign-born),¹⁰ but those who return home are grateful for their education and often serve as informal ambassadors for this country. They embody America ideals, creating reserves of goodwill. (Mexican President Vicente Fox and UN Secretary General Kofi Anan hold degrees from American colleges.) But as Nye writes, “Last year, the number of foreign students at American colleges and universities fell for the first time since 1971. Recent reports show that total foreign student enrollment in our 2,700 colleges and universities dropped 2.4 percent, with a much sharper loss at large research universities.”¹¹ Nor should we minimize the economic consequences of these declining enrollments: NAFSA, the Association of International Educators, reports that foreign students and their families add nearly \$13 billion per year to the economy; the losses to the economy in 2003 (the last year for which data is available) were more than \$300 million.¹² As former Secretary of State Colin Powell said, “I can think of no more valuable asset to our country than the friendship of future world leaders who have been educated here.”

No doubt the most pressing issue is funding. The DOS budget for public diplomacy in 2003 totaled \$600 million, 40 percent of which was spent on educational and cultural programs—4 percent of the department’s overall international affairs budget or about three-tenths of 1 percent of the Pentagon’s annual budget. ECA, with an annual budget of \$245 million (of which approximately \$3 million is earmarked for cultural activities), offers a variety of programs, including academic, youth, and professional exchanges; support for traveling exhibits of paintings, sculpture, photographs, and film; tours of performing artists; lectures and workshops by cultural specialists. Among the highlights: CultureConnect, which brings eminent cultural figures like Yo-Yo Ma, Wynton Marsalis, and Frank McCourt to foreign audiences, focusing on ages 12-25, to promote cross-cultural understanding; the Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Preservation, which helps countries preserve historic sites and manuscripts, museum collections, and traditional forms of music, dance, and language; the International Partnerships Among Museums program, which develops linkages between museums in this country and abroad; the Jazz Ambassadors program, which sends quartets on four-to-six-week tours abroad, featuring performances, workshops, and lecture-demonstrations; and the Performing Arts Calendar, a database web site listing information about American performing artists touring abroad, which posts can use to extend the tours to their regions – and which is no longer funded.

Of course this represents but a fraction of the international cultural activities undertaken by the private sector. American popular culture, prominently film and music, is one of the most powerful forces at work in the world today. But American culture takes many

⁹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr. “You Can’t Get Here From There.” *The New York Times*, November 29, 2004.

¹⁰ Fareed Zakaria. “Rejecting the Next Bill Gates.” *The Washington Post*, November 23, 2004, Page A29.

¹¹ Nye, op. cit.

¹² *Data on International Education: 2003-2004 Academic Year*, NAFSA: Association for International Education, <http://www.nafsa.org/content/PublicPolicy/DataonInternationalEducation/data.htm>, updated November 10, 2004

forms, each of which enhances the image of this country, and ECA, which according to a report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office “is the primary focus for public-private partnerships within State,”¹³ plays an important role in forging connections between artists, writers, and intellectuals in this country and abroad. Some 1,500 private sector organizations, academic institutions, and NGOs manage the majority of exchanges and cultural programs in ECA, which also maintains a network, through the National Council of International Visitors, of 80,000 American volunteers who help to show this country to foreign guests. They work, with considerably less show than their counterparts in the entertainment industry, to influence perceptions of America, and vice versa. And the fruits of these public-private partnerships endure: visitors to this country gain deeper views of a vast and changing society, while Americans broaden their understanding of the world beyond our shores. Cultural exchanges counteract the stereotypes that inform the attitudes of people everywhere, revealing the common ground.

A Malaysian NGO’s effort to document and preserve the traditional ceremonies of Kelantan, a province in northern Malaysia, against the strictures of the local Islamic authorities (PAS), is a fine example of cultural diplomacy in action. With a small grant from the Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Preservation, this NGO has helped to maintain the ancient traditions of dance, shadow puppetry, and healing rites, training a new generation of local artists. These practices, which mix Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, and animist elements, fly in the face of the purifying doctrines of the Islamists. The political consequences cannot be ignored: after more than a decade of banning such ceremonies, in the recent elections PAS lost many seats because, as a political commentator noted, the Islamists only know how to ban things; they have nothing to offer to replace them. What the NGO promotes, then, is a foil to Islamic extremism. And this small investment has paid off handsomely, clearing a space in the uncommitted middle of the political spectrum for more moderate voices to get a hearing.

¹³ *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Interagency Coordination Efforts Hampered by the Lack of a National Communication Strategy*. United States Government Accountability Office Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Science, State, Justice, and Commerce, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives. April 2005.

III

Fact-Finding Mission

In June 2004, six members of the ACCD went on a fact-finding mission to Muscat, Cairo, and London to study the role of the arts and culture in the conduct of foreign policy; to assess the impact of arts and cultural programming; to review the value to field posts of arts and cultural offerings; to examine how arts and cultural programs can be coordinated at the mission level; to learn how the DOS can best support the missions in implementing arts and cultural programming; to see possible structural impediments to increased arts and cultural programming; to explore how the arts and culture can enhance America's image abroad; and to discuss ways to collaborate with the American private sector.

The ACCD's discussions confirmed the message conveyed by recent polling—America's image and reputation abroad could hardly be worse. There is deep and abiding anger toward U.S. policies and actions. It is essential, though, not to see our audiences, Islamic or otherwise, as monolithic or their opinions as indiscriminating. Our interlocutors in Oman and Egypt carefully distinguished between different aspects of America, roundly condemning, on the one hand, our policies in the Middle East and praising, on the other, our higher educational system, science, technology, and values—freedom, democracy, and individual dignity. America is still seen as a place where things can happen, where change is not feared: a land of diversity, openness, candor, and generosity.

Which is to say: the door is open—even if the welcome mat is not always prominently displayed—for cooperation on a broad range of endeavors, including culture and the arts. In fact, a common frustration voiced was that on the cultural front America had vanished. One woman said it seemed as if America was “under the veil.” Another speaker said the Arab world was ready to cooperate with America but that America had gone missing. Several speakers urged us not to be afraid, but to please rejoin the cultural scene. The rest are here, they said—the British, French, Germans, Italians—but where are you?

In Muscat, a senior official raised an issue the committee was to hear repeatedly: that the idea of an American ideal is drowned out by Arab media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian impasse and the war in Iraq; the fallout from the Abu Ghraib prison scandal—the photographs, broadcast repeatedly and circulated continuously on the Web, of hooded prisoners attached to electrodes, of leering American soldiers, and so on—would long haunt the image of the United States. And in a country as small as Oman (population 2.3 million) cultural diplomacy efforts are perforce small: a concert by Mary Wilson, a CultureConnect ambassador; micro-scholarships for the study of English; the opening of a fifth American Corner, the public-private initiative designed to replace the American libraries closed after the Cold War, in which aspects of American culture are represented; support for exhibits; exchanges in the International Visitor Leadership Program, etc.

“The problem is sustainability,” said another official, echoing a story told by a diplomat in Southeast Asia, who was at the opening of an American library in the 1960s.

“Aren’t you pleased to finally have an American library,” he said to his host.

“Actually, this is our sixth library,” said the host. “During every international crisis, you open a library, and then, when the crisis passes, you close it down and disburse the books. When you close this library, don’t bother to distribute the books,” he concluded. “We have plenty already.”

This official also raised the issue of translation, mourning the fact that so few English titles exist in Arabic translation, and vice versa. Indeed translation lies at the heart of any cultural diplomacy initiative; some misunderstandings between peoples may be resolved through engagement with each other’s literary and intellectual traditions; the poverty of insight displayed by American policy makers and pundits in their view of other lands may in some cases be mediated by contact, in translation, with thinkers from abroad. It was a Frenchman, after all, Alexis de Tocqueville, who wrote the classic work on American democracy. And translation can lead to cultural cross-fertilization. But it is important to note that, according to *Publisher’s Weekly*, while translated works make up 25-45 percent of the books published annually in many countries, the figure in this country is 3 percent; of 185,000 titles published here in English in 2004, only 874 were works of literary translation. In a word, we are not privy to the conversations—literary, philosophical, political, and spiritual—taking place in much of the world. And the same is true for many Arabs. The 2002 Arab Human Development Report issued by the UN noted that, “Translation is one of the most important channels for the dissemination of information and communication with the rest of the world. The translation movement in the Arab world, however, remains static and chaotic. On average, only 4.4 translated books per million people were published in the first five years of the 1980s (less than one book per million people per year), while the corresponding rate in Hungary was 519 books per one million people and in Spain 920 books.” Translation is an inexpensive form of exchange, the fruits of which—the dissemination of information and ideas, the inculcation of nuanced views of foreign cultures, increased empathy and understanding, the recognition of our common humanity—will be on display for a very long time.

A theme emerged from a luncheon in Muscat with members of the Omani Fine Arts Society, which we would hear throughout our travels: the need for more exchanges of actors, animators, artists, directors, writers, stage technicians, and web designers. This is a form of what Joseph S. Nye, Jr. calls “soft power,” which he defines as “the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals,”¹⁴ and which he argues is as essential to the war on terrorism as the carrots and sticks of economic and military might—and considerably less expensive.

“If we can relate to each other on a cultural basis,” said a photographer, “we can transcend our political differences.”

This theme was reinforced at a meeting, in Cairo, with a senior Egyptian official. He had just published a book about the Arabic language, in which he asserted that reforms—political and spiritual—must begin in the language—an idea which had earned him the wrath of an MP seeking to ban the book.

¹⁴ Joseph S. Nye, Jr. “Propaganda Isn’t the Way: Soft Power.” *The International Herald Tribune*, January 10, 2003.

“We need more than ever to open ourselves to ideas from abroad, because we are facing a wave of intolerance and religious intolerance,” he said defiantly.

Like everyone we met in the region, he dismissed the Middle East Project (MEP), believing that reform could not be imposed from without. Instead, he called on the United States to concentrate on training young artists: to send special effects specialists, say, or theater consultants. He mourned the fact that he could not attract famous American actors and directors to the Cairo Film Festival: the appearance of Sean Penn or Spike Lee, he said, would have a dramatic impact on Egyptian popular opinion.

“There is a basic misunderstanding between the West and the Islamic world,” he continued. “Your prejudices are cultural—that we are a backward people. Our prejudices are political—that you are very biased toward Israel.” And because the United States has cut back on its cultural programming, Arabs only see American political machinations; hence there is no cultural counterweight to our foreign policy.

At the National Cultural Center, a dazzling \$60 million complex of theaters, music halls, exhibition spaces, and offices built for the Egyptian people by the Japanese government, we saw the results of cultural diplomacy: 700 performances a year, attended by 300,000 people, each of whom, in some small corner of his or her mind, remembers the benefactors of the space in which they take such pleasure.

The seven members of the Ministry of Culture were eager to meet the committee, even if, as they said, they feared this was just another attempt to refurbish our image in the region. They insisted that culture was the answer to the Islamists. “We want to oppose the Islamic groups with good artworks,” said one official. “The Islamists are very good at talking, but culture can oppose the extremists.” And so they requested training in several fields—technicians (sound, light, décor), stage directors (artistic and technical), singers, dancers, musicians; support for their musical library, instruments, and scores; funding for a year-long residency of an American conductor; and help with preserving the heritage of Arabic music, a project undertaken with the help of the Dutch Embassy. They hoped for exchanges of American and Egyptian troupes. And they complained about the haphazard nature of our efforts in the cultural sphere: how the embassy will ask them to collaborate on an event with only two days’ notice, when their calendars have been set for months.

In a meeting the next day at our embassy we learned why there was often a lack of coordination between Washington, the post, and Egyptian cultural institutions.

“You reach the people through arts and culture,” said an official. “But our cultural presence in this country no longer exists. The French Cultural Ministry can give you a monthly calendar. We can’t do anything, because we don’t know when anything will happen. We put on a circus act to keep things running until the money arrives. We’re not speaking to anyone anymore. People ask, Where’s your culture? Where are you?”

The missing link, it seemed, was in Washington. Several people said that more funding at ECA would make cultural programming more cost-effective.

“Then you can send troupes on to other countries,” said an official, who thought the embassy had to offer a variety of cultural programs—books in translation, performers, teachers. “In a country of 71 million people you can’t just shotgun things all the time.”

Especially when anti-American feelings are running so high. “To win the war of ideas,” said a senior American official, “we should wake up each day with more friends than enemies. But it’s the other way around—which is fertile ground for our enemies.”

He described a new phenomenon—the instantaneousness of Arab media, MTV, and cultural programming—which gives us an opportunity to get our story out, not least because an Arab version of the culture wars is on: “They’re asking, Is it okay for a female singer to have a pierced belly button? Which is to say: this is a vibrant place. It isn’t a barren cultural landscape with a monolithic view of America.”

Nevertheless, he took a dim view of Washington’s forays into the regional media markets. Al Hurra, the Arab-language television station launched in the wake of 9/11, is outperformed by Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, and other satellite stations.

“We want to be on the cutting edge of their cultural wars,” he argued. “So we need new instruments to play here. People-to-people exchanges. American teachers in the schools. And a sounding board—perhaps a group of wise Muslims who can tell us where they see things heading in the Middle East.”

To get such a reading the committee met with a group of independent artists, dancers, directors, film makers, musicians, and writers, whose disdain for American military assistance to Egypt was palpable. They said in no uncertain terms that they had no interest in improving America’s image in the Arab world; moreover, it was probably too late to remedy the situation. But they welcomed technical assistance.

“Interaction is the only way to make friends,” said a filmmaker. “One hundred soldiers make Egyptians angry; one workshop makes friends.”

“Art is the mirror of the people,” said a woman wearing a veil. “It is the perfect medium to bring people together.”

But the very existence of the ACCD evoked some humor and sarcasm among Egyptian artists and officials alike. Several said that America seems to launch cultural initiatives, and tries to explain itself, only when it is in trouble. Cultural engagement must be consistent though, if it is to be successful. Thus, the story later told to the ACCD at the British Council of an American tourist who, on a visit to Oxford, asks the gardener the secret of the green lawns. It’s very simple, the gardener replies. You prepare the bed, plant seeds, water, and then cut it for five hundred years.

“Cultural diplomacy emerges at times of crisis,” said a senior Egyptian official. “But this should be a process of building bridges, not a one-way street. Developing respect for others and their ways of thinking—this is what cultural diplomacy does. Let there be a dialogue. We’ve had a cultural agreement with the United States since 1962: why not implement it? We want people to know about real Americans. You have the right to be different, and I have the right to be different. Let your people know that Egyptians are not just fanatics—Islam is one religion, but there are many ways of applying it. I won’t let what happened in Abu Ghraib change my feelings for the American people. My idea of America is the Statue of Liberty opening her arms, not turning away. Americans should build bridges, they shouldn’t be afraid, they need to open up again. Don’t go into a shell.”

This speech led inevitably to the question of accountability. But no metric or language exists by which to gauge the success of a cultural initiative. As Milton Cummings notes, “a certain degree of faith is involved in cultural diplomacy.”¹⁵ How to quantify, for example, the effect of the thirty essays, articles, and poems that a Vietnamese writer, participating in the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa, published

¹⁵ Cummings, *op cit*, 2.

after 9/11, in the largest daily newspaper in Hanoi, detailing American reactions to the tragedy? This writer, who as a child had lived through the U.S. bombardment of his city, proved to be an empathetic witness to the trials of the American people. As Juliet Antunes Sablosky writes, “some of the fundamental goals of cultural diplomacy appear to be like the value of the arts. They are not easy to measure.” She goes on to note, however, that it was a USIA-sponsored visit to America that changed F.W. DeKlerk’s ideas about blacks and whites living together. His decision, as President of South Africa, to release Nelson Mandela from prison and start his country on the path to a multiracial democracy became a victory for American cultural diplomacy—and the people of South Africa.¹⁶

More fruits of American exchange programs were on display in a meeting at our embassy in London, where alumni of the International Writing Program, the Fulbright Program, and the International Visitor Leadership Program detailed their experiences in the United States. A curator praised the openness of the curators and museum directors who readily shared financial information and operational strategies with him. A composer from Belfast, who premiered a work in New York City just weeks after 9/11, said that cultural dialogue can achieve things that political dialogue cannot. A writer, grateful for the space and time in which to complete his new novel, was pleased to discover no political agenda operating in his program. Each was impressed by American volunteerism, inspired by the variety of American culture, and came away with a more complex understanding of America. They proved, in the words of one diplomat, that culture, a point of access and interest, opens doors when certain doors are closed for political reasons. This is why cultural diplomacy requires long-term thinking—five, ten, twenty years.

“Our cultural contacts have long memories,” said the diplomat. “They remember the good things we do for them. Our political contacts don’t remember for very long.”

On the last stop of our fact-finding mission we visited the British Council, which as an independent institution (funded by the government and by revenues from the teaching of English) promotes Britain’s national interests through cultural programming. For seventy years, one official said, the British Council has drawn on various resources to cast different angles of vision on the United Kingdom. He said it was hugely important for the Council not to be viewed as a mouthpiece for the government, particularly in places where they need to make the most progress.

“We’re not prepared to accept the Foreign Office’s message for short-term political gain,” he said, “because that would undermine our credibility.”

A semi-autonomous institution thus offers a means for those who wish to participate in British cultural activities but who, for a variety of reasons, wish to keep their distance from the trappings of the British government. The local chapters of the Council also provide congenial settings for events—away from the embassies, which for the sake of security increasingly resemble fortresses.

“Access is everything to us,” said the official.

Presence, engagement, reciprocity—these are the watchwords of their work. And their confidence-building measures in troubled regions depend upon subtle interventions and an enduring commitment to the truth.

¹⁶ Sablosky, *op cit*, 14-15.

“You’ve got to underpin your credibility by not engaging in propaganda but by showing the rough and the smooth,” said the curator of an exhibit by a group of Islamic photographers from Indonesia and Malaysia invited to work in the United Kingdom. Indeed, the photographers were encouraged to portray Islamic life without concern for the feelings of the British government.

“Design answers questions,” said the curator. “Art asks questions.”

The courage to entertain those questions, hard as they may be, lies at the heart of cultural diplomacy, which works subtly, by indirection, and over a long period of time. Hence the need for an enduring commitment to soft power, to winning hearts and minds in the cultural arena. The most generous estimate of U.S. spending on cultural diplomacy, though, is 65 cents per capita—the lowest in a recent survey of nine countries.¹⁷ Richard T. Arndt observes that “A decent cultural diplomacy costs amazingly little, a shadow of the cost of one wing of fighter aircraft.”¹⁸ Now is the time to create a cultural diplomacy infrastructure and policy for the twenty-first century.

What did we learn from our fact-finding mission? Cultural diplomacy:

- Helps create “a foundation of trust” with other peoples, which policy makers can build on to reach political, economic, and military agreements;
- Encourages other peoples to give the United States the benefit of the doubt on specific policy issues or requests for collaboration, since there is a presumption of shared interests;
- Demonstrates our values, and our interest in values, and combats the popular notion that Americans are shallow, violent, and godless;
- Affirms that we have such values as family, faith, and the desire for education in common with others;
- Creates relationships with peoples, which endure beyond changes in government;
- Can reach influential members of foreign societies, who cannot be reached through traditional embassy functions;
- Provides a positive agenda for cooperation in spite of policy differences;
- Creates a neutral platform for people-to-people contact;
- Serves as a flexible, universally acceptable vehicle for rapprochement with countries where diplomatic relations have been strained or are absent;
- Is uniquely able to reach out to young people, to non-elites, to broad audiences with a much reduced language barrier;
- Fosters the growth of civil society;
- Educates Americans on the values and sensitivities of other societies, helping us to avoid gaffes and missteps;
- Counterbalances misunderstanding, hatred, and terrorism;
- Can leaven foreign internal cultural debates on the side of openness and tolerance.

¹⁷ *International Cultural Relations: A Multi-Country Comparison*, by Margaret J. Wyszomirski. Washington, D.C.: Center for Arts and Culture, 2003. The countries surveyed were Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Japan, Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

¹⁸ Arndt, op cit, xxi.

But what this mission also revealed is that increasing cultural diplomacy is not just a matter of political will. The infrastructure in Washington and in the field to support cultural and artistic activities is inadequate. Likewise, funding for the programs, as well as for human resources in Washington and at our embassies abroad, is insufficient.

With the severe personnel cuts in Washington staff in the 1990s, our embassies were largely thrown on their own resources if they wished to continue cultural programming. Modest increases in Washington staff would bring economies of scale and improvements in coordination. A larger Washington staff would have a greater capacity to contact artists and agents, obtain or prepare promotional materials, and coordinate multi-country tours.

Public diplomacy field staff has been particularly hard hit by the budget cuts in the 1990s and the subsequent merger with the DOS. Our embassies lost public diplomacy FSO and FSN positions (there are now 614 public diplomacy FSO staff in the DOS; in the 1960s, there were some 1,200 FSO staff in the USIA).¹⁹ They had administrative staff transferred to centralized embassy offices and public diplomacy positions downgraded, and they saw an enormous growth in desk work. Public diplomacy officers, who used to spend their time out of the office, cultivating contacts and promoting American culture, are now “chained to their desks.” They need to return to the field.

¹⁹ Cummings, *op cit*, 8.

IV

Recommendations

The following compilation of recommendations, drawn from various reports, interviews, and discussions, for the Secretary of State to consider, is divided into three categories, the first of which the ACCD regards as its highest priority:

- To increase funding and staffing for cultural diplomacy and, in a larger sense, for public diplomacy.
- To provide advanced training and professional development opportunities for FSOs, who are public affairs officers and have responsibility for public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy throughout their careers, with particular attention to research, polling, and the uses of new media.
- To create an independent clearinghouse, in the manner of the British Council, to promote the national interest; support missions in their efforts to bring the best artists, writers, and other cultural figures to their audiences; develop public-private partnerships; and raise funds, with separate housing from the embassies so that cultural events can attract wider audiences.
- To set aside funds for translation projects, into and out of English, of the most important literary, intellectual, philosophical, political, and spiritual works from this and other countries. A recommendation of the Djerejian report on public diplomacy—to create the American Knowledge Library, translating thousands of the best American books in many fields of education into local languages and making them available to libraries, American Studies centers, universities, and American Corners—should be coupled with a recommendation to the National Endowment for the Arts—to create a fund for international literature to “ensure that the American reading public has access to a broad array of contemporary international literature by assisting publishers to pay translation fees for international titles they accept for publication, thereby increasing the number of literary works in translation they can afford to publish each year, and by helping publishers with the marketing of these titles once they are produced.” Put these two ideas together to establish a secure base from which to inspire and sustain the dialogue among all nations, which is essential to effective cultural diplomacy.
- To streamline visa issues, particularly for international students. Specific recommendations from the Association of American Universities and other academic groups: 1) establish a timely process by which exchange visitors holding F and J visas can revalidate their visas, or at least begin the renewal process, before they leave the United States to attend academic and scientific conferences, visit family, or attend to personal business; 2) create a mechanism by

which visa applicants and their sponsors can inquire about the status of pending visa applications and establish a process by which applications pending for more than 30 days are given priority processing; 3) revise visa reciprocity agreements between the United States and key sending countries, such as China and Russia, to extend the duration of visas each country grants citizens of the other, thereby reducing the number of times that visiting international students, scholars, and scientists must renew their visas; and 4) implement a fee-collection system for the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) that allows for a variety of simple fee payment methods that are quick, safe, and secure, including payment after the individual arrives in the United States.²⁰

- To implement the recommendations issued by the Center for Arts and Culture in *Cultural Diplomacy: Recommendations and Research* (www.culturalpolicy.org).
- To revamp Al Hurra, the Arabic-language television station, in keeping with the highest traditions of American broadcasting.
- To expand international cultural exchange programs, inviting more Arab and Muslim artists, performers, and writers to the United States, and sending their American counterparts to the Islamic world.

The following recommendations, while smaller in scope, are nonetheless vital to effective cultural diplomacy, and the ACCD urges the Secretary of State to consider implementing as many of these as possible:

- To negotiate reciprocal arrangements for exchange programs in developed countries, through bi-national foundations, which can raise money and send people in both directions, freeing funds for programs in less-developed countries.
- To maintain momentum established in exchange programs by creating a formal mechanism through which to keep track of alumni and involve them in embassy activities—web sites, newsletters, surveys, etc. Encourage missions to seek local corporate sponsorship for events using returned exchange people.
- To highlight the importance of cultural diplomacy at every level of the DOS, encouraging ambassadors and FSOs to promote cultural activities; to build, in the words of Richard T. Arndt, “a corps of authentic cultural diplomats.”²¹
- To create more American Corners, with links to digital libraries and online books. The WiderNet Project (www.widernet.org), which is developing and distributing a digital library to developing countries, provides a model for breaking down the digital divide between the First and Third Worlds.

²⁰ “Leading Science, Higher-Education and Engineering Groups Urge Six Improvements to U.S. Visa-Processing Quagmire,” AAAS (Advancing Science, Serving Society) News Release, 12 May 2004.

²¹ Arndt, op cit, 554.

- To increase funding for World Affairs Councils and the National Council for International Visitors and encourage them to seek more public-private partnerships.
- To widen CultureConnect to include young artists, creating a corps of emerging cultural figures willing to spend longer periods of time abroad.
- To make greater use of available assets, notably closer cooperation with the Department of Defense and its assets, such as military bands. Explore the possibility of collaboration with the USO and its performing arts tours. Interactive videos and video-streaming of master classes with performing artists, writers, and thinkers could reach large number of people at minimal cost.
- To re-establish an office dedicated to the acquisition of private sector television and film media for official overseas use, and to export some of the excellent documentaries produced by PBS explaining different aspects of American culture.
- To expand the Sister Cities program to form more and stronger relationships between American communities and people and places around the world.
- To incorporate medical outreach into cultural diplomacy, coordinating visits to the home countries of foreign-born doctors now practicing in the United States (approximately 200,000 or nearly one-quarter of our physician work force) to treat patients and train local doctors.
- To expand the process of surveying alumni of the International Visitor Leadership Program to gauge their success in “moving the needle” of public opinion in favor of the United States.
- To require American officials abroad to participate in embassy outreach activities and add such a requirement to annual performance forms.
- To encourage U.S. cultural organizations to sponsor internships for young men and women from the Islamic world.
- To encourage U.S. museums to sponsor tours of artworks and artifacts from museums in the Middle East.

Finally, some of the public diplomacy recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, urging the government to engage in the struggle of ideas underway in the Islamic world, dovetail with the imperatives of cultural diplomacy: “Just as we did in the Cold War, we need to defend our ideals abroad vigorously. America does stand up for its values. The United States defended, and still defends, Muslims against tyrants and criminals in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. If the United States does not act aggressively to define itself in the Islamic world, the extremists will gladly do the job for us.

- Recognizing that Arab and Muslim audiences rely on satellite television and radio, the government has begun some promising initiatives in television and radio broadcasting to the Arab world, Iran, and Afghanistan. These efforts are beginning to reach large audiences. The Broadcasting Board of Governors has asked for much larger resources. It should get them.
- The United States should rebuild the scholarship, exchange, and library programs that reach out to young people and offer them knowledge and hope. Where such assistance is provided, it should be identified as coming from the citizens of the United States.²²

²² *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*. Thomas H. Kean, Chair. New York: W.W. Norton, 2004, 377.

V

Summary

It was Zhuge Liang, a Chinese military advisor during the period of the Three Kingdoms, who told a general that even in war, “Above all else is culture”²³—a useful axiom for understanding the practice and place of cultural diplomacy in a nation’s political life. For it is through culture that a nation defines itself, and the cultural riches of the United States have won us many friends and admirers over the centuries. But Patricia Sharpe’s lament captures something essential about our current predicament: “When I was a press officer working for the U.S. Information Agency,” she writes,

I spent a good deal of time refuting Soviet disinformation—and taking pride in the fact that we in the USIA had a mandate to tell the whole American story, warts and all. Warts or no, we didn’t have to lie to look good. But in those days we didn’t have to explain away the shockingly cruel and illegal treatment of prisoners at Guantánamo, at Abu Ghraib, in Afghanistan. Who in the world can look at scenes of torture and associate America with ‘democratic ideals’? And once a campaign of disinformation is underway, nothing the U.S. government says will be trusted by anyone with good sense for a long time to come.... Soft power is what American used to have in spades. Soft power doesn’t need propaganda or a hard sell. And the America I used to love never needed a hard sell either.²⁴

The task now is to present the enduring truth of the American experience—that we are a people capable not only of espousing, enacting, and spreading our noblest values but also of self-correction. It was no accident that the first flowering of American literature—the essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden*, the stories of Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*, Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*, Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*—occurred in the run-up to the Civil War, when the constitutional crisis destined to tear the country apart came into focus; nor that the most eloquent witness to the ensuing carnage was Emily Dickinson, the reclusive poet from Amherst, Massachusetts, who knew that many of her countrymen would not survive “the Hour of Lead” that had befallen our land. But her poetry, her witness, has sustained millions of people the world over. And it is this tradition of facing the truth that may inspire American artists and writers to come to terms with our latest fall from grace—a tradition upon which to build a permanent structure of cultural diplomacy.

²³ Liang, Zhuge. *Mastering the Art of War*. New York: 1989

²⁴ “Selling Cars, Colas and Countries,” posted on *Whirledview.com* by Patricia Lee Sharpe on 19 December 2004. <http://whirledview.typepad.com/whirledview/2004/12/index.html>.

Appendix A

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Appendix B

Members of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy

Patricia de Stacy Harrison, Chair

Patricia de Stacy Harrison was Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs from 2001-2005, where she focused on reaching younger, more diverse publics; created “Partnerships for Learning”; directed the resumption of the Fulbright Program in Afghanistan and Iraq; and, as Acting Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy during the Iraq war, helped bring the Iraq National Symphony Orchestra to Washington. The author of *A Seat at the Table and America's New Women Entrepreneurs*, Ms. Harrison was a founding partner of E. Bruce Harrison Company, founded the National Women’s Alliance, and co-chaired the Republican National Committee from 1997-2001.

Bob Babbage

Bob Babbage is the national managing partner of Babbage Cofounder, a government relations and corporate business development firm. After statewide service as Kentucky's elected Secretary of State, 1992-96 and State Auditor, 1988-92, he founded Leadership Kentucky, helped start the Lexington Forum and the Louisville Forum, and serves on the boards of directors of two investor-backed corporations and the board of the Catholic Action Center. Mr. Babbage is the author of *Meet You in the Lobby*, and writes about government relations in his regular statewide column by the same name. On talk radio he is a weekly political analyst on issues and races for WVLK-AM Lexington.

Curtis S. Chin

Curtis S. Chin is Managing Director, Public Affairs, USA, and Managing Director, Asia-Pacific Burson-Marsteller. He is a public affairs/public diplomacy and policy specialist who draws on public and private sector experiences to advise corporations, multi-lateral bodies and other organizations on issues ranging from the need for public outreach and stakeholder engagement to the seeming backlash against “globalization.” He served as Special Assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce under President George H.W. Bush, then worked in East Asia from 1995-2001. Named a fellow of the Japan Society in 1989, Mr. Chin is the author of a best-selling book in Japan on U.S. management schools.

T. Willard Fair

T. Willard Fair is President and Chief Executive Officer of the Urban League of Greater Miami, Inc. He has received Florida’s Outstanding Citizen Award and been recognized by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCED) as a champion for student success. He is co-founder, with Florida Governor Jeb Bush, of the Liberty City Charter School, the first charter school organized in the State of Florida. He

chairs the boards of directors of the Miami-Bayside Foundation, the Miami-Dade Empowerment Zone Trust, and the Liberty City Charter School. In January 2003, he was elected President of the Senior Citizens Mutual Insurance Company (SCMIC).

Christopher Merrill

Christopher Merrill directs the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa. He has published books on contemporary American poetry, Georgia O'Keefe, and the game of soccer. His most recent books are *Things of the Hidden God: Journey to the Holy Mountain* (nonfiction), *Only the Nails Remain: Scenes from the Balkan Wars* (nonfiction) and *Brilliant Water* (poetry). Professor Merrill has written for a variety of newspapers, magazines, and literary journals, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Paris Review*, *The American Poetry Review*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *DoubleTake*. He serves as the literary critic of Public Radio International's *The World*.

Carl Schnee

Carl Schnee is a partner in the office of Bifferato, Bifferato & Biden, specializing in alternative dispute resolution (mediation and arbitration) and consultation. He has served as U.S. Attorney for the District of Delaware; as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Delaware Art Museum; as Chair of the Board of the Children's Advocacy Center; and on many boards, including the YMCA Resource Center and the Delaware Center for Justice. In 1992, he received the Herbert Harley Award from the American Judicature Society and, in 2003, the 18th Annual Gerald E. Kandler Memorial Award given by the American Civil Liberties Union and Foundation of Delaware.

F. William Smullen, III

Colonel Bill Smullen is Director of National Security Studies at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University. A professional soldier for 30 years, with two tours in Vietnam, Col. Smullen's last assignment on active duty was Special Assistant to the eleventh and twelfth Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr., and General Colin L. Powell. Then he served as General Powell's executive assistant, helping him to write and promote his best-selling autobiography, *My American Journey*; as his chief of staff at America's Promise: The Alliance for Youth; and, from 2001-2002, as his chief of staff at the Department of State.

Charles H. Webb, Jr.

Dr. Charles H. Webb, Jr. is Dean Emeritus of the Indiana University School of Music, which, during his tenure, was ranked first among U.S. accredited schools of music. He also maintained an active performance schedule as conductor and pianist; made several recordings; and published collections of free harmonizations and descants to well-known hymns, as well as a module of Handel's *Messiah*. He chaired the Board of Advisors of International Music Festivals Inc., and served on the Indiana Arts Commission, on the

Board of Trustees of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, and on the recommendation board for the Avery Fisher Prize. Dr. Webb received the President's Medal in 2000.