Strategic Communications and Public Diplomacy "Seen on the Web" (#59)
March 18, 2017, Seen on the Web 1521-1570

This is a compilation of news, articles, essays, and reports on strategic communications, Public Diplomacy, public affairs, U.S. government international broadcasting, and information operations. The editorial intent is to:
● share with busy practitioners the academic and policy ferment in Public Diplomacy and related fields
● from long speeches, testimonies, and articles, flag the portions that bear on Public Diplomacy
● provide a window on armed forces thinking on the fields that neighbor Public Diplomacy such as military public affairs, information operations, inform-influence-engage, and cultural learning, and
● introduce the long history of Public Diplomacy by citing some of the older books, articles, reports, and documents that are not available on the internet.
Public Diplomacy professionals always need a 360-degree view of how ideas are expressed, flow, and gain influence. Many points of view citied here are contentious and/or biased; inclusion does not imply endorsement.

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In the News

1. ON CAPITOL HILL

● Committee Chair Elise Stefanik, R-N.Y., set out a broader theme of the hearing in opening remarks, in which she noted that too often the U.S. focuses on the digital and technical aspects of cyberwarfare and influence campaigns, but she argued the U.S. must "keep in mind that information warfare is about information, including psychological and cultural aspects."
Expert panel to Congress: Can't 'bomb our way to success' in info warfare
Brad D. Williams, Fifth Domain Cyber, March 16, 2017

2. AT THE UNITED NATIONS

● "The United States is outraged by the report of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). That such anti-Israel propaganda would come from a body whose membership nearly universally does not recognize Israel is unsurprising. That it was drafted by Richard Falk, a man who has repeatedly made biased and deeply offensive comments about Israel and espoused ridiculous conspiracy theories, including about the 9/11 terrorist attacks, is equally unsurprising. The United Nations Secretariat was right to distance itself from this report, but it must go further and withdraw the report altogether.
Statement by Ambassador Nikki Haley, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, on the Recent ESCWA Report on Israel
Ambassador Nikki Haley, United States Mission to the United Nations, March 15, 2017

● U.N. chief Antonió Guterres rejected a report published by ECSWA, a Beirut-based agency of the world body— ECSWA—comprised entirely of 18 Arab states, which accuses Israel of "apartheid."
UN chief rejects Richard Falk's ESCWA report accusing Israel of 'apartheid'
UN Watch, March 16, 2017

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Elements of Informational Power

3. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

● Just putting someone in charge, whether it is the Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications, the Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy or a new USIA is not sufficient. We must change our methods. It requires new thought leadership and new team members. Our current government team does not have the training, expertise, experience or methods to be effective. It also requires new rules. Our laws, based on an old communication environment where you can separate domestic and foreign influence, no longer reflect the reality of today's world. They unduly hinder our ability to play in the game.
The Same Old Game, New Rules: The Need for a New Team for the War of Ideas
Kevin McCarthy, To Inform is to Influence, March 12, 2017

● . . . the job of chief diplomat of the United States comes with a responsibility to be a voice for the policies of the president, and the values and principles of the nation. It is often called "public diplomacy," but that hardly does justice to the fact that eyes around the world are on the United States. A comment from the secretary can warn adversaries, guide decision-makers and keep allies motivated to support U.S. goals.
Rex Tillerson is becoming Secretary Silent
Editorial Board, The Washington Post, March 16, 2017

4. BROADCASTING

● Even as Russia insists that RT is just another global network like the BBC or France 24, albeit one offering "alternative views" to the Western-dominated news media, many Western countries regard RT as the slickly produced heart of a broad, often covert disinformation campaign designed to sow doubt about democratic institutions and destabilize the West.
Russia's RT Network: Is It More BBC or K.G.B.?
Steven Erlanger, The New York Times, March 8, 2017

5. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

● . . . [David] Pozen describes Stephen Hess's motivational typology of leaks: "In motivational terms, Hess explained, the main variants include: the *ego leak*, meant to satisfy the leaker's 'sense of self-importance'; the *goodwill leak*, meant to curry favor with a reporter; the *policy leak*, meant to help, hurt, or alter a plan or policy; the *animus leak*, meant to settle grudges or embarrass others; the *trial-balloon leak*, meant to test the response of key constituencies, members of Congress, or the general public; and the *whistleblower leak*, meant to reveal a perceived abuse and, unique among the list, 'usually employed by career personnel."
The Law of Leaks
Susan Hennessey and Helen Klein Murillo, Lawfare, February 15, 2017

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Professional Topics

6. SOCIAL MEDIA • INTERNET

● To appreciate the impact that increased Internet penetration will have on religiously conservative societies, it is crucial to understand how online interaction changes the behavior of members of marginalized communities. One important theory, that of "identity demarginalization," is particularly instructive.
What the Middle East's Internet Boom Means for Gay Rights, and More
Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Nathaniel Barr, Foreign Affairs, March 4, 2017

● Victims of online "trolling", rejoice. A Norwegian site may have found the key to muzzling malicious commenters on the internet: requiring people to read an article before discussing it. As an experiment, NRKbeta, a media and technology subsidiary of public broadcaster NRK, has since mid-February required viewers to correctly answer three questions about articles before being able to comment on them.
Norway 'anti-troll' site makes you read before commenting
Yahoo News, March 2, 2017

7. CYBER

● . . . the broad information operations launched by Russian intelligence agencies during last year's election campaign — in which the cyber-enabled theft of personal correspondence from democratic political operatives was amplified by carefully timed online document dumps and automated bot armies on social media — have demonstrated the importance of "information security" to Western societies, as well.
NATO expert: Russians have it right — it's information security not cyber
Shaun Waterman, cyberscoop, February 16, 2017

● A top diplomat at NATO reported that cyberattacks targeting their networks and facilities shot up 60 percent in 2016. The disclosure placed the blame for the attacks on nation state institutions. It was also disclosed that numerous countries have expressed increasing concerns about the risk of hackers that target national election campaigns after what has been reported to have happened in the United States.
A global cyberwar on politics and government
Kevin Coleman, Fifth Domain Cyber, February 8, 2017

8. DISINFORMATION ▪ FAKE NEWS

● By now we've all agreed the term "fake news" is unhelpful, but without an alternative, we're left awkwardly using air quotes whenever we utter the phrase. The reason we're struggling with a replacement is because this is about more than news, it's about the entire information ecosystem. And the term fake doesn't begin to describe the complexity of the different types of misinformation (the inadvertent sharing of false information) and disinformation (the deliberate creation and sharing of information known to be false).
Fake news. It's complicated.
Claire Wardle, First Draft, February 16, 2017
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● It's too easy for misinformation to spread on the web. Fake news! Yes, like all of us, Berners-Lee is confounded with the problem of online communication and social bubbles creating a ripe landscape for false information. Specifically "the use of data science and armies of bots" to game the system.
The Father of the World Wide Web Has Some Worries About His Baby
Rhett Jones, Gizmodo, February 12, 2017

How To Spot Fake News
The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), StopFake, February 27, 2017

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● . . . fighting the ill-informed with facts is like fighting a grease fire with water. It seems like it should work, but it's actually going to make things worse.
There's an intriguing sociological reason so many Americans are ignoring facts lately
Tristan Bridges, Business Insider, February 27, 2017

● President Trump's claim that he's been the subject of false and "fake news" stories has been mocked by an eye-rolling media, but a Secrets analysis of Trump coverage reveals that Team Trump have been hit with an average of one false, distorted or denied story a day.
Trump, 'We are fighting the fake news,' our list shows one 'fake' story a day
Paul Bedard, Washington Examiner, February 24, 2017

● . . . how do we know which of the news providers around us can be trusted? Consider the following list of earmarks of journalistic quality: 1. Willingness to retract, correct, and implicitly or explicitly apologize for misstatements in a timely manner…. 2.A reliance on professional ethics, including . . .Accuracy…. An interest in contrary evidence…. 3.Follow the story regardless of its political implication…
Here's what non-fake news looks like
Michael Schudson, Columbia Journalism Review, February 23, 2017

● The Russia Foreign Ministry has launched a new feature on its website to flag news stories it considers to be fake. The new section of the site . . . showcases screenshots of five media reports from publications including the *New York Times*, Bloomberg and NBC News. Stamped across each image is a large, red "FAKE" imprint with a statement below reading, "This article puts forward information that does not correspond to reality." There is no further information or evidence provided to back up such a claim, just a link to the original publisher's story.
Russia's New Website to Flag Fake News Is Flagging Stuff That's Definitely Not Fake News
Aric Jenkins, Fortune, February 23, 2017

● How can the West respond to Moscow's attempts to blur the boundaries between truth and falsehood, and its insistence that there are no objective facts? 1. Root out disinformation (by increasing daily media monitoring, both in mainstream and social media sites). 2. Debunk disinformation (by developing fact-checking institutions . . . and investing in quality journalism by re-establishing the position of fact-checker). 3. Protect media consumers against disinformation (by explaining Russian false narratives and disinformation techniques . . . . 4. Predict disinformation attacks (by analyzing Kremlin narratives, their characteristics and frequency to find the most vulnerable target groups).
Kremlin Mind Games And How The West Can Change The Rules
Urve Eslas and Donald N. Jensen, Center for European Policy Analysis, February 20, 2017

● Last week, we described how trolling and personal intimidation towards journalists and commentators is the most prominent form of propaganda in the Nordic countries. The conclusion was confirmed in a story published last Thursday by the Swedish daily Eskilstuna Kuriren. For the first time, Swedish readers could go behind the scenes and learn about how work is done at a Swedish troll factory.
Behind the scenes at the Swedish troll factory
Disinformation Review, February 20, 2017
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9. FACT CHECKING

● Fact-checkers have grappled with the question of whether political falsehoods should be called "lies" long before 2016. "I have been reluctant to use that phrase, too, simply because I can't get into someone's head," says Glenn Kessler, columnist for The Washington Post Fact Checker.
When is a false claim a lie? Here's what fact-checkers think
Alexios Mantzarlis, StopFake, March 10, 2017

10. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

● Here is some reading material for the job of DNSA/SC. Please excuse my freestyle reference citations, I sought to put the titles first for clarity and ease of reading. 1. Propaganda and CounterTerrorism, Dr. Emma Briant, 2015. Probably the most comprehensive book written about not only the position of DNSA/SC, but about Strategic Communications, Information Operations, and a bit about Public Diplomacy. Please excuse the fact that my name appears all too often. 2. National Strategic Communication: Back to the Future, 2013, US Army War College. 3. Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication, September 2004. Jeff Jones helped work on this document while he was the serving DNSA/SC. 4. U.S. Governmental Information Operations and Strategic Communications: A Discredited Tool or User Failure? Implications for Future Conflict By Dr. Steve Tatham, 2013 5. Terrorist Use of the Internet: Information Operations in Cyberspace By Catherine A. Theohary 6. Strategic Communication: Origins, Concepts, and Current Debates By Christopher Paul 7. Strategic Communications and the Decline of US Soft Power By Gene E. Bigler 8. Public Diplomacy War by Other Means Oleg Svet 9. Engaging the Private Sector for the Public Good: The Power of Network Diplomacy By Kristin Lord
Reading List: Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications
Joel Harding, To Inform is to Influence, February 20, 2017

● Military success can be either directly aided or challenged by activities in the Information Environment. Military communicators need to convey the message that operations are in line with political decisions and serve the interest of the involved nations and their populace. In this respect, they may act as guardians of the political Narrative, ensuring that political will is reflected in words and deeds throughout operations planning and execution.
Multinational Capability Development Campaign Military Strategic Communication Handbook Draft
U.S. Joint Forces Command, publicintelligence.net, February 26, 2017

11. SOFT POWER

● Mick Mulvaney, head of the Office of Management and Budget said: "It is not a soft-power budget. This is a hard-power budget, and that was done intentionally. The president very clearly wants to send a message to our allies and our potential adversaries that this is a strong-power administration."
The Most Unkindest Cuts
Max Boot, Commentary, March 16, 2017
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● "It's dead on arrival. It's not going to happen. It would be a disaster," said South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, of the Trump budget plan. "If you take soft power off the table, then you're never going to win the war."
Want to Win Wars? Fund Soft Power, Trump's Generals Say
Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, Defense One, March 2, 2017

12. INFORMATION WARFARE

● The Dutch government, like its German and French counterparts, fears that Russia is trying to influence the upcoming election through hacking schemes and by spreading fake news.
Russian hackers use Dutch polls as practice
Thessa Lageman, Deutsche Welle, March 10, 2017

● If the Russian government did interfere in the [U.S.]'s electoral processes last year, then it has the capacity to do so in every election going forward. This is a powerful and dangerous weapon, more than warships or tanks or bombers. Neither Russia nor any potential adversary has the power to damage the U.S. political system with weapons of war. But by creating doubts about the validity, integrity, and reliability of U.S. elections, it can shake that system to its foundations.
Russia's ability to manipulate U.S. elections is a national security issue, not a political one
Robert Kagan, Brookings, March 9, 2017

● This is not about who has more firepower. It's about who has the best idea about how you will be governed. It's an information fight about their version of theological conformity against individual freedom. Military force is part of the struggle, but we will not win until we change the minds of millions of Muslims who believe in this Islamist jihad.
Trump, ISIS and Einstein
Bruce M. Lawlor and Kevin McCarty, The Washington Times, March 8, 2017

13. RADICALIZATION

● Not all who undergo a process of radicalisation leading to violence in the West are young adults (in their twenties), but the majority appear to be, and the trend is towards radicalisation at even younger ages. This sketch pivots on this demographic finding. The primary focus of attention is young men, since women, while they are radicalising in larger numbers, remain a small minority, and it is still too early to definitively say whether there are additional gender specific interpretive issues.
Sketch of a Social Ecology Model for Explaining Homegrown Terrorist Radicalisation
Lorne L. Dawson, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague, January 2017

14. ANTI-SEMITISM

● In political activism and academe, anti-Semitism is increasingly widespread but typically denied by those who have embraced it.
Anti-Semitism, the "Longest Hatred"
Raymond Stock, Middle East Quarterly, Spring 2017
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15. MEDIA SAVVY, EDUCATION, JUDGMENT

● Weber Shandwick will also support media literacy efforts at the K-12 and college level and share information and insights on "content manipulation" and the media landscape with employees, clients, and the PR industry.
Weber Shandwick roundtable to start dialogue on fighting fake news
Sean Czarnecki, PR Week, December 27, 2016

16. IDEAS, CONCEPTS, DOCTRINE

● . . . there is still not one ISIS militant who has faced trial for international crimes anywhere in the world. So I am speaking to you, the Iraqi government, and to you, UN member states, when I ask: Why? Why has nothing been done? Could it be that these crimes are not serious enough to warrant an international investigation? NO – ISIS is today the most brutal terror group in the world, representing what the Security Council has called an "unprecedented threat" to international peace and security. [Transcript]
Amal Clooney breaks with Hollywood, echoes Trump approach to ISIS and the U.N.
Pardes Saleh, Red Alerts Politics, March 10, 2017

●. . . within the Pentagon's modernization budget -- which represents a paltry one-percent of gross domestic product -- the Army gets only one in seven acquisition dollars. How little is that? It's about a third of the $70 billion that Americans spend on lottery tickets each year. It's about a quarter of the $83 billion they spend on tobacco products. It's about a fifth of the $100 billion they spend on illegal drugs (or for that matter, beer).
U.S. Spends Three Times More On Lottery Tickets Than On Equipping Its Army (And It Shows)
Loren Thompson, Forbes, March 2, 2017

● What isn't clear is if the Global Engagement Center, with all of its new "authority, resources and mandate," will be used to target American audiences or pay American journalists.
US Officials Won't Say if a New Anti–Russia Propaganda Project Is Targeting Americans
Adam H. Johnson, The Nation, March 9, 2017

● Stop the culture of micromanagement. This environment breeds a sense of distrust among subordinate leaders. Gallup found that disengagement among employees, as a direct cause of micromanagement, cost the average 10,000-person company more than $600,000 annually in salary for days during which no work was performed. * * * . . . operating in a communications-denied or -degraded environment is almost a certainty. Our [composite warfare commander] structure is sure to crumble when its crutch of perfect information is removed.
Distributed Lethality Requires Distributing Authority
Lieutenant (j.g.) Andrew Beeler, U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, January, 2017

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17. IDEAS OF AMERICA

● And Americans are increasingly living in social silos and susceptible to confirmation bias — receptive only to information and ideas that confirm what they already think. Hence the nation's foundational precepts need to be carefully studied, robustly debated and thoughtfully celebrated. ***The United States began as an errand into the wilderness and for many generations had a longing for dispersal, for living beyond the sound of a neighbor's ax. James Fenimore Cooper in the forest, Henry Thoreau by the pond, Herman Melville at sea, Mark Twain on the river, Teddy Roosevelt experiencing the "iron desolation" of the high plains, and Willa Cather experiencing "that vast silence" of Nebraska's plains, all enriched the American experience.
The Intellectual Diversity we Need
George F. Will, The Washington Post, March 10, 2017

Countries and Regions

18. RUSSIA

● Now there is funding for domestically produced TV and film content. Anti-Western rhetoric has skyrocketed since the start of the current geopolitical rift. Meanwhile, more than half the population considers television the most trustworthy news source, according to a poll last year by the Levada Center, an independent research organization. And because people have little firsthand knowledge about foreigners, it is easy for TV producers to hop on the pendulum as it swings back against the West. In this way they impose their state-sponsored views: the West must be feared, Western people have crumbling morals, etc.
Four Centuries and Three Decades of Russian Thinking
Justin Lifflander, American Foreign Service Association, Accessed March 18, 2017

● The English version of Sputnik <u>informed</u> that the EU is spreading fake news about Russia among its citizens and now intends to spread it also among Russians. As an example of such fake news it gives e.g. the "annexation of Crimea" or the "Russian invasion of Ukraine". Just one problem - Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and military intervention in the East of Ukraine both happen to be true; you will find the debunks in the table again.
Fake news à la russe
EU East Stratcom Task Force, Disinformation Review, March 9, 2017

● Russian authorities have decided to step up their efforts to control the flow of information and to counter misrepresentation of their country. This narrative has echoed around international media reporting over the last week. At a closer look, however, little of what has been reported is in fact news: Russia has been building up capacities to actively influence public opinion at home and abroad over a considerable period of time – and hasn't done much to hide it.
Nothing new – but no reason to relax
Disinformation Review, March 2, 2017

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● "In the past people were able to influence each other only through direct contact," the textbook reads. "Today, the means of influencing the human mind have become much more sophisticated, thanks to the accumulated knowledge of thousands of years, information technologies, communication, and management."
The Secrets of Russia's Propaganda War, Revealed
Alexey Kovalev and Matthew, The Moscow Times, updated March 2, 2017

● The annexation of Crimea has become a major source of national pride for Russians, even greater than the honor of being the first country to send a man into space, a poll suggests.
More Russians Are Proud Of Crimea Than Being First Country To Send A Man To Space, Poll Says
Damien Sharkov, Newsweek, March 1, 2017

● The United States still cannot get over the Russian interference in last year's presidential elections, while European countries are terrified at the prospect of something like that happening to them this year. The new methods of Russian influence are well-known * * * Hackers * * * Fake News * * * Feaks * * * Trolls * * * Pranksters * * * Soft power v propaganda * * *
Russia's soft warfare: Hackers, fake news, freaks, trolls and pranksters are Russia's new soft power weapon arsenal.
Roman Dobrokhotov, Al Jazeera, February 27, 2017

● To an outsider it might seem odd that Russian media would blank out Trump at a time when the future of his plans to mend ties between Washington and Moscow are hanging in the balance. But for Russians who just one month ago were rejoicing with state media over the inauguration of a pro-Kremlin US president, Trump's unaccounted-for disappearance from their TV screens explains itself.
Russia falls out of love with Trump as reality sinks in
Isabel Gorst, The Irish Times, February 25, 2017

● But Perentzhiev's statement disregards NATO's stated mission, strategic concept, and overall purpose. NATO's strategic documents show that NATO's purpose is to cultivate cooperation in an effort to promote peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.
Is NATO an Anti-Russian Project, as Russian Analyst Says?
polygraph.info, February 13, 2017

19. UKRAINE

● The usual disinformation about Ukraine being a nazi state - governed allegedly by "the same people" who collaborated with Nazi Germany (or their descendants) - was accompanied by calls for a "denazification" of Ukraine, to be performed by Russia. The similarly repeated disinformation about Ukraine performing a genocide of Russians in Donbas was accompanied by calls for annexation of the whole Ukraine.
Hatred and lies. "News" about Ukraine
EU East Stratcom Task Force, Disinformation Review, March 9, 2017

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● Ukraine's Ministry of Information Policy is preparing a list of websites that "undermine Ukrainian sovereignty" as part of an effort to uphold the country's new information security doctrine, signed on February 25 by President Petro Poroshenko.
Ukraine Will Blacklist Websites That 'Undermine Ukrainian Sovereignty'
Isaac Web, Global Voices, March 2, 2017

20. ISLAMIC STATE

● An unambiguous trend emerged: the ISIS brand is contracting. Indeed, in recent months, the geographic scope of ISIS' media has narrowed, with dormancy levels the highest at the periphery.
Is ISIS Breaking Apart?
Charlie Winter and Colin P. Clarke, Foreign Affairs, January 31, 2017

21. CHINA

● Once in power, the Communist Party banned Western news organizations, only permitting reporters from the Eastern bloc, including the Soviet news agency TASS, and occasional sympathetic journalists from the West like Agnes Smedley, Edgar Snow, and Anna Louise Strong.
No More Utopias
Gail Pellett, Los Angeles Review of Books, March 3, 2017

Toolkit

22. EXCHANGES

● For seven decades, the bi-national, bi-directional, university-to-university exchanges of Fulbright have been the flagship of American cultural diplomacy. Without [the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Public Diplomacy] is little more than an embassy press-office. And yet, after decades of discussion, the role of education and culture is never mentioned in discussing the peculiar American creation, Public Diplomacy. PD proponents rarely mention its educational and cultural base. In the stormy months ahead more than ever, it might help to include ECA and Fulbright into the PD rhetoric.
Does No One Care?
Richard Arndt, John Brown's Press and Public Diplomacy Blog Review, March 8, 2017

23. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

● . . . the movement of students from one country to another is sensitive to fluctuations tied to political and economic forces. So some officials cautioned that a "Trump effect' is just one possible explanation for this year's application figures. Beyond that, many schools, including New York University, the University of Southern California and Northeastern University, reported that their international numbers are up. Purdue University reported a 1.2 percent decline in graduate school applications.
Amid 'Trump Effect' Fear, 40% of Colleges See Dip in Foreign Applicants
Stephanie Saul, The New York Times, March 16, 2017
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