



Anti-Americanism and the Limits of Public Diplomacy: Winning Hearts and Minds? (Routledge Studies in US Foreign Policy)

Stephen Brooks

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Contrary to the view held by many who study American foreign policy, public diplomacy has seldom played a decisive role in the achievement of the country's foreign policy objectives. The reasons for this are not that the policies and interventions are ill-conceived or badly executed, although this is sometimes the case. Rather, the factors that limit the effectiveness of public diplomacy lie almost entirely outside the control of American policy-makers. In particular, the resistance of foreign opinion-leaders to ideas and information about American motives and actions that do not square with their pre-conceived notions of the United States and its activities in the world is an enormous and perhaps insurmountable wall that limits the impact of public diplomacy.

This book does not conclude that public diplomacy has no place in the repertoire of American foreign policy. Instead, the expectations held for this soft power tool need to be more realistic. Public diplomacy should not be viewed as a substitute for hard power tools that are more likely to be correlated with actual American influence as opposed to the somewhat nebulous concept of American standing.

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