

## American Images

### ***Introduction***

The importance of American images, thoughts, and beliefs is well-expressed by Ian Jack, editor of *Granta*:

America shapes the way non-Americans live and think. Before the Cold War ended, that had been true of half of the world for several decades. Now, with the possible exception of North Korea and Burma, it is true of all of it. American cultural, economic and political influence is potent almost everywhere, in every life. What do we think of when we think of America? Fear, resentment, envy, anger, wonder, hope?<sup>1</sup>

Kenneth Boulding identifies “the images which are important in international systems [as] those which a nation has of itself and of those other bodies in the system which constitute its international environment.”<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the American image can be broken down into three parts: The image America has of the world in general, the American image of its role in the world, and the image the world has of it. The data on those images is voluminous.

The most crucial aspects of those American images are exemplified in relations between the U.S. and that amorphous area sometimes referred to as the Middle East and sometimes as the Arab world. That region is the current focus of American foreign policy, especially as expressed by budget allocations. The reactions of other countries in the world to the Middle East inform how the United States sees those countries. And the Arab world is the source of the most traumatic event of America’s recent past. For that

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Jack, “What We Think of America,” *Granta* 77, London, Spring 2002, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth E. Boulding, “National Images and International Systems,” in *Culture, Communication and Conflict, Readings in Intercultural Relations, Revised 2d ed.*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 444-5.

reason, in examining the overall American image of the world, its role in it, and the image the world has of America, I focus on the Middle East.

In discussing American images today, it is important to note that American public opinion is sharply divided, almost precisely in half, along the lines of the 2004 Presidential election. A survey by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) found “striking differences between the perceptions of Bush and Kerry supporters.”<sup>3</sup> The observed differences in views included whether or not Iraq had WMDs before the Iraq War, the world public opinion on Bush’s reelection, and perceptions of the candidates’ foreign policies. The German Marshall Fund’s Transatlantic Trends report concurs about this “fundamental split in the way Republicans and Democrats view the U.S. role in the world.”<sup>4</sup> These differences make it difficult to characterize a single “American image” of anything. Unfortunately, it is not possible within the scope of this paper to discuss every facet of American public opinion. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, the focus will be on the images of the government and the majority surveyed in various polls.

### ***The American image of the world: With us or against us***

The results of the 2004 presidential election indicate that “Americans prefer a simpler leader whom they perceive to be ‘strong’ to a more nuanced leader who sees the world in more complex terms.”<sup>5</sup> According to Jacob Taber, “we have a president who actually sees the world on those [black and white] terms. Countries are either with us or

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<sup>3</sup> Steven Kull, “The Separate Realities of Bush and Kerry Supporters,” *The PIPA/Knowledge Networks Poll*, October 21, 2004, 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> German Marshall Fund of the United States and the Compagnia di San Paolo, *Transatlantic Trends 2004*. Key Findings Report available online at: <http://www.transatlantictrends.org/>. Accessed 04/02/05, 4

<sup>5</sup> Gary Hart, “Bush Votes: America Prefers it Simple. That was Kerry’s Big Problem; Democrats Have Yet to Convince Most Americans that they Understand,” *The Independent* (London), November 4, 2004, News, 7.

against us.”<sup>6</sup> Taber goes on to say that “President George W. Bush ... [has a] distorted, borderline-delusional world view”<sup>7</sup> He might have done better, though, to say that Bush was paranoid: “In the paranoid imagination, *alien* means the same as *evil*, while the tribe itself is defined as good: a single network of malevolent intent stretches over the rest of the world.”<sup>8</sup> By this definition, much of Bush’s wartime rhetoric was the result of paranoid thinking.

Like their leader, the majority of Americans are inclined to see the world in black and white, us and them. “The enemy is all bad, one’s own nation is of spotless virtue.”<sup>9</sup> When asked for their overall opinion of 22 different countries, Americans gave high ratings to Australia, Great Britain, and Canada, with over 80% of respondents thinking favorably of them. On the other hand, North Korea, the Palestine Authority, Iran, Iraq, and Libya all came in with 25% or less of respondents holding a positive view of the country.<sup>10</sup> This disapproval of countries labeled as part of the “Axis of Evil” is consistent with Boulding’s theory of reciprocal national images. He states that “there is a tendency toward both consistency and reciprocation – if nation A pictures itself as hostile toward B, it usually also pictures B as hostile toward it...”<sup>11</sup>

Further reflecting the American with-us-or-against-us attitude, France’s status in American eyes has taken a nosedive between 2001, when 77% of respondents thought

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<sup>6</sup> Jacob Taber, “True Leadership when America Needs it Most,” *Intelligencer Journal* (Lancaster, PA), October 23, 2004, Saturday, A-5.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Sam Keen, “Faces of the Enemy,” in *Culture, Communication and Conflict, Readings in Intercultural Relations, Revised 2d ed.*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 408.

<sup>9</sup> Boulding, “National Images and International Systems,” 452.

<sup>10</sup> See chart, “US Opinion of the World”, by author, in Appendix.

<sup>11</sup> Boulding, “National Images and International Systems,” 447.

positively of France, and 2004, when only 47% of respondents did. The shift occurred in March of 2003, when France opposed “the U.S. invasion of Iraq”<sup>12</sup>, and the favorable rating dropped to a Freedom-Fries-eating 34%.<sup>13</sup> Since Americans generally see Europeans as similar to them, it is no surprise that Americans would like to see Europe in the “with us” camp. A June 2004 survey found that 60% of Americans think that “the partnership between the US and the European Union should become closer.”<sup>14</sup>

It seems clear to most Americans, though, that Arabs fall into the category of “against us”. The American image of the Arab has obscure origins, but the image itself is distressingly clear. The Arab is defined as a “vagabond, drifter, hobo and vagrant”<sup>15</sup>, and “in countless films, Hollywood” tells us that “Arabs are brute murderers, sleazy rapists, religious fanatics, oil-rich dimwits, and abusers of women.”<sup>16</sup> This list parallels Sam Keen’s list of ways that enemies are dehumanized and portrayed: the enemy is seen as the enemy of God (or “evil”), barbarian, rapist, beast, insect, and reptile.<sup>17</sup> “No stereotype has endured more than that of the Arab ... We have learned to fear everything Arab and especially Muslim.”<sup>18</sup> This stereotype comes from Hollywood, which “has used

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<sup>12</sup> Heather Mason, “Russia Through Americans’ Eyes,” *The Gallup Organization*, March 23, 2004, Government & Public Affairs, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Polling the Nations database, World Affairs poll done by the Gallup Poll (Roper Center for Public Opinion Research), Feb 9-12, 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Polling the Nations database, poll done by German Marshall Fund; Field Date - Jun 6-26, 2004. Also German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends 2004*, 3.

<sup>15</sup> Jack Shaheen, “The Face of Arabs in American Mass Media,” in *Culture, Communication and Conflict, Readings in Intercultural Relations, Revised 2d ed.*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 412.

<sup>16</sup> Jack Shaheen, *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People*, New York, NY: Olive Branch Press, 2001, 2.

<sup>17</sup> Keen, “Faces of the Enemy,” 408-9.

<sup>18</sup> Rachna Sheth, “Shaheen criticizes coverage of Arabs,” *Daily Texan*, March 5, 2004, E 3.

repetition as a teaching tool, tutoring movie audiences by repeating over and over, in film after film, insidious images of the Arab people.”<sup>19</sup>

Boulding claims that “impressions of nationality are formed mostly in childhood and usually in the family group.”<sup>20</sup> Therefore, the criticism that Shaheen levels at *Hidalgo*, one of Disney’s latest “family films,” is particularly important. Shaheen says that *Hidalgo* perpetuates “a tragic post-9/11 reality: Hollywood’s methodical hate-Arab implants continue to teach viewers worldwide to despise all things Arab.”<sup>21</sup> Hollywood’s depiction of Arabs is similar to the mirror image found in the Soviet-American struggle, when “each nation’s press portrayed the other nation as aggressive and treacherous.”<sup>22</sup>

Why is it important for the average American to know and care about the Arab stereotype? It is critical because dislike of ‘the stranger,’ which the Greeks knew as xenophobia, forewarns that when one ethnic, racial, or religious group is vilified, innocent people suffer...Ponder the consequences. In February 1942, more than 100,000 Americans of Japanese descent were displaced from their homes and interred in camps; for decades blacks were denied basic civil rights, robbed of their property, and lynched; American Indians, too, were displaced and slaughtered; and in Europe, six million Jews perished in the Holocaust.

This is what happens when people are dehumanized.<sup>23</sup>

Less obvious consequences can also follow from negative images. As Jerome Frank puts it, “A person’s beliefs and his expectations largely determine how he thinks

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<sup>19</sup> Shaheen, *Reel Bad Arabs*, 1.

<sup>20</sup> Boulding, “National Images and International Systems,” 445.

<sup>21</sup> Jack Shaheen, “In Its New ‘Family Film,’ Disney Clobbers Arabs-Again!” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, May 2004. Vol.23, Iss. 4; 66-67.

<sup>22</sup> Jerome D. Frank, “The Face of the Enemy,” in *Culture, Communication and Conflict, Readings in Intercultural Relations, Revised 2d ed.*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 436.

<sup>23</sup> Shaheen, *Reel Bad Arabs*, 4.

and how he behaves.”<sup>24</sup> This certainly holds true when applied to the American image of Arabs; the torture at Abu Ghraib is the most extreme example of this pervasive attitude.

Such negative images are self-perpetuating. “The distorted image of the enemy acts ... to block acceptance of his genuine conciliatory moves. An apparently friendly gesture tends to be seen as either evidence of the enemy’s weakening, or an effort to create dissension within one’s own ranks.”<sup>25</sup> When Iraq allowed U.N. weapons inspectors into the country, for example, it was seen as something only done because of American insistence, and as an effort that was too little, too late. This is also an example of the fundamental trait attribution error: “when ‘we’ do something negative, we often attribute the behavior to the situation ... on the other hand, when ‘they’ do something negative, it is because it is their typical behavior.”<sup>26</sup> Since the reverse is also true, anything positive that “they” do must be a result of the situation, and not an inherent trait. As a film reviewer puts it, “If it’s true that Americans learn most of what they know about the world from Hollywood, we can only pray that audiences will see Muslims and Middle Easterners depicted with more complexity, and more sympathy.”<sup>27</sup>

### ***American image of the U.S. role in the world: Spreading democracy or building an empire?***

While American opinion on what the proper American role is differs, “there is one option in international relations that Americans simply never have: that is, to do

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<sup>24</sup> Frank, “The Face of the Enemy,” 436.

<sup>25</sup> Frank, “The Face of the Enemy,” 440.

<sup>26</sup> Gary Weaver, “The Crisis of Cross-Cultural Child and Youth Care,” in *Culture, Communication and Conflict, Readings in Intercultural Relations, Revised 2d ed.*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 369.

<sup>27</sup> Ben Steelman, “Ben on Film: Arabian rights; Hollywood rarely looks beyond stereotypes when depicting Arabs”, *Morning Star* (Wilmington, NC), April 18, 2003, 22.

nothing.”<sup>28</sup> That active role is confirmed by official policy and public opinion. The question is whether those American activities are spreading democracy or imperialism, and whether they should be unilateral or multilateral.

In Bush’s 2005 inaugural speech, he said “the policy of the United States [is] to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.”<sup>29</sup> Bush is “casting off America’s isolationist tendencies and explaining why we can’t go back there.”<sup>30</sup> Like Bush, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) believes “that American leadership is good both for America and for the world; that such leadership requires military strength, diplomatic energy and commitment to moral principle.”<sup>31</sup> Public opinion concurs: “60% of Americans continue to back the war”<sup>32</sup> in Iraq.

The PNAC and the Bush administration suggest a new American imperialism that is not all paranoid rhetoric. “Imperial power has once again become fashionable. In London and Washington DC, you hear suggestions ... that an American empire, properly administered, might do a lot of good.”<sup>33</sup> And Richard N. Haas (now director of policy planning at the State Department), gave a speech called “Imperial America”, in which he

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<sup>28</sup> Glen Fisher, “International Negotiation: Cross-Cultural Perception,” in *Culture, Communication and Conflict, Readings in Intercultural Relations, Revised 2d ed.*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 496.

<sup>29</sup> Bush, George W. Inaugural Speech: President Bush Sworn-in to Second Term, The Capitol Building, Washington, DC, January 20, 2005. Available online at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/inaugural/>

<sup>30</sup> Howard LaFranchi, “Bush’s Global Message as a Plea to Americans,” *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston, MA), January 24, 2005, USA; 1.

<sup>31</sup> William Kristol, Chairman, The Project for the New American Century, <http://www.newamericancentury.org/>

<sup>32</sup> The Pew Research Center, “Mistrust of America in Europe Ever Higher, Muslim Anger Persists,” *Pew Global Attitudes Project*, March 16, 2004, 1.

<sup>33</sup> Eric Schlosser, “Over There,” *Granta* 84, London, Winter 2003, 59.

argued that “the United States should assume a world role similar to that of Great Britain in the nineteenth century.”<sup>34</sup>

Eric Schlosser claims that “[a]lthough members of the Bush administration have strongly denied that they are seeking to create a new American empire, their current plans for administering Iraq seem vaguely familiar.”<sup>35</sup> Both the American government and people are loath to hear that the United States is building an empire. In May 2003, *New York Times* correspondent Chris Hedges gave a speech – in which he asserted that the United States has embarked on wars to achieve empire – and “students in the audience climbed the stage to disrupt him, and he was escorted out by the police before the ceremony concluded.”<sup>36</sup> Most Americans see their role as one of involvement, but not imperialism. “Overwhelming majorities of Americans and Europeans want their countries to play an active role in the world. Both believe the United States and Europe share enough values to cooperate on international problems.”<sup>37</sup>

Among Americans, the perception that we must spread democracy to the Arab world is persistent. Murad Kalam says, “I promised myself I would never accept anything less than full democracy for my fellow Muslims in the Arab world or apologize for the tyranny that now masquerades as Islam.”<sup>38</sup> America’s imposition of democracy through arms is seen as a way to share “universal values. These aren’t our values. Minority rights, rights of women, freedom, democracy, free press. These are the values of civilization.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Chris Hedges, “Over There”, *Granta* 84, London, Winter 2003, 27-33.

<sup>37</sup> German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends 2004*, 29.

<sup>38</sup> Murad Kalam, “Over There,” *Granta* 84, London, Winter 2003, 44.

<sup>39</sup> Ed Bradley, “The Image War,” *CBS News Transcripts*, May 16, 2004. Available online at: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/05/14/60minutes/main617617.shtml>



Most American rhetoric claims that such involvement should be multilateral, not unilateral. However, Robert Kagan says that “[m]ost Americans are not principled multilateralists. They are instrumental multilateralists.” Kagan compares the U.N. Security Council to “a blue-ribbon commission. If it makes the right recommendation, it strengthens your case. If not, you can always ignore it.”<sup>40</sup> Polls have shown that Americans, unlike Europeans, are willing to use force without multilateral approval.<sup>41</sup>

Public opinion on the topic varies. A study recently published by Alexander Todorov and Anesu Mandisodza found that Americans misestimate public opinion. “Americans show a strong preference for multilateral policies. At the same time, Americans underestimate public support for such policies and overestimate support for unilateral policies.”<sup>42</sup> This kind of misperception can lead to a dangerous conformity, such as found in Solomon Asch’s famous experiment.<sup>43</sup>

Although public opinion varies, the government stance is unwavering: it’s clear that President Bush takes an “instrumental multilateralist” view. “Trying to be popular in the global sense, if it’s not in our interests, makes no sense,” he said during the first of three campaign debates with John Kerry.<sup>44</sup> The charges of imperialism leveled at America are largely derived from the Bush-led U.S. policy toward the Middle East. By using force

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<sup>40</sup> Robert Kagan, “Multilateralism, American Style,” *The Washington Post*, September 13, 2002, A39.

<sup>41</sup> German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends 2004*, 29.

<sup>42</sup> Alexander Todorov and Anesu Mandisodza, “Public Opinion on Foreign Policy: The Multilateral Public that Perceives Itself as Unilateral,” *Policy Brief, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs*, September 2003, 2. Available online at: [http://www.wws.princeton.edu/~policybriefs/todorov\\_opinion.pdf](http://www.wws.princeton.edu/~policybriefs/todorov_opinion.pdf).

<sup>43</sup> Sarah McCarthy, “Why Johnny Can’t Disobey,” in *Culture, Communication and Conflict, Readings in Intercultural Relations, Revised 2d ed.*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 268.

<sup>44</sup> Mark Sage, “Bush and Kerry – Sons of America’s Elite,” *The Press Association*, October 25, 2004, Home News.

against first Afghanistan and then Iraq, and with Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and Libya all within its sights now, the United States is tremendously militarily involved in the Arab world.

The policy implications of the dehumanization of the Middle East are clear when we consider Iran's nuclear program:

In what amounts to a reinterpretation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, Mr. Bush now argues that there is a new class of nations that simply cannot be trusted with the technology to produce nuclear material even if the treaty itself makes no such distinction."<sup>45</sup>

The PNAC concurs with Bush: "the only acceptable outcome of their negotiations with Iran is that it must give up that right"<sup>46</sup> to nuclear technology and assistance in exchange for forswearing weapons.

### ***How they see us: The image the world has of the U.S.***

Although the United States has long been seen as a haven – "Traveling to America was to me then like going to heaven"<sup>47</sup> – that image is gone. With tremendous power, a foreign policy that fluctuates between imperialistic and culturally insensitive, and a tendency towards unilateral action, it's no surprise that the world takes a somewhat dim view of the United States. As Admiral Gene LaRoque put it:

In the name of national security, we've been attacking different countries around the world, small ones. Many that Americans don't even remember: Grenada, Libya, Panama. All this without any remonstrance from the American public. We always find an excuse to do it. We attacked five

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<sup>45</sup> David E. Sanger, "Reshaping Nuclear Rules," *The New York Times*, March 15, 2005, Section A; Column 3; Foreign Desk; 1.

<sup>46</sup> Gary Schmitt, "Memorandum to Opinion Leaders, Subject: Iran's 'Right' to a Nuclear Program," *The Project for A New American Century*. Published March 16, 2005, online: <http://www.newamericancentury.org/iran-20050316.htm>. Accessed 4/09/05.

<sup>47</sup> Raja Shehadeh, "What we Think of America," *Granta* 77, London, Spring 2002, 72.

Muslim countries – Lebanon, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan – in twenty years. Is it any wonder some people don't like us?<sup>48</sup>

In general, the world sees America in an unflattering light, which Americans do not always grasp. For example, although Americans give Egypt a favorable rating of over 50% (better than France), Egyptian positive opinion of the U.S. comes in below 10%.<sup>49</sup> This is an example of a “relationship [that] is not necessarily either consistent or reciprocal,”<sup>50</sup> as discussed by Boulding. While the world sees America as “a state with lavish resources – financial, diplomatic, technological, scholastic – at its disposal”<sup>51</sup>, it also sees America as very ignorant of the world around it. That appearance of ignorance translates to one of not caring: “A major factor in unfavorable world opinion about America is the perception that we don't care about other countries' interests.”<sup>52</sup>

The world also sees Americans as fanatics – not religious fanatics, but political ones. Jack writes that “the sheer fact of being American is for many Americans to be part of an evangelical, patriotic faith – to be one of the elect, one of the saved.”<sup>53</sup> Perhaps that is a part of what inclines America towards acting unilaterally when it deems it necessary – the country is simply acting out of a kind of missionary zeal. But that action – going to war against Iraq against the wishes of the United Nations – has cost the United States in goodwill.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Studs Terkel, “Over There,” *Granta* 84, London, Winter 2003, 63.

<sup>49</sup> See charts, “U.S. Opinion of the World” and “World Opinion of U.S.” by author, in Appendix.

<sup>50</sup> Boulding, “National Images and International Systems,” 447.

<sup>51</sup> Ian Jack, “Over There,” *Granta* 84, London, Winter 2003, 7. Jack, “Over There,” 7.

<sup>52</sup> Ted Knap, “What it will Take to Change our Image Abroad,” *Scripps Howard News Service*, March 15, 2005, Section: Commentary.

<sup>53</sup> Jack, “Over There,” 7.

<sup>54</sup> See chart, “Opinions of the U.S. vs. Americans,” by author, in Appendix.

In this litany of bad news, a mixed blessing is that the world has a “blacktop” image of the United States: “the perception [is] that it is *leaders* who are the real villains,”<sup>55</sup> not the general population. In Europe, for example, “the prevailing attitude ... was definitely: ‘We’re not anti-American. We’re anti-Bush.’”<sup>56</sup> The dislike for Bush is not confined to Europe. “58 percent of people living in Africa, Latin America, North America, Asia, and Europe believe U.S. President George Bush will have a ‘negative impact on [global] peace and security.’”<sup>57</sup>

Tom Regan is concerned that “unless [Bush’s] administration changes its approach to world affairs in its second term, it will continue to erode America’s good name, and hence its ability to effectively influence world affairs.”<sup>58</sup> This consistently kinder opinion of Americans than of the United States as a whole<sup>59</sup> is similar to the mirror image phenomenon of the United States and Russia as discussed by Urie Bronfenbrenner<sup>60</sup>, and to Dulles’ image of the Soviet Union, according to Ole Holsti: Dulles believed in “the “good” Russian people versus the “bad” Soviet leaders.”<sup>61</sup> This is

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<sup>55</sup> Frank, “The Face of the Enemy,” 437.

<sup>56</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, “An American in Paris,” *New York Times*, January 20, 2005, A 23.

<sup>57</sup> Tom Regan, “Poll: World worries about new Bush term: Survey shows a majority in 16 of 21 nations believe Bush could make world more dangerous,” *Christian Science Monitor*, January 20, 2004, World > Terrorism & Security. Available online at: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0120/dailyUpdate.html>

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> See chart, “Opinions of the U.S. Over Time,” by author, in Appendix.

<sup>60</sup> Urie Bronfenbrenner, “The Mirror Image in Soviet-American Relations,” in *Culture, Communication and Conflict, Readings in Intercultural Relations, Revised 2d ed.*, ed. Gary R. Weaver (Boston: Pearson Publishing, 2000), 420.

<sup>61</sup> Ole R. Holsti, “The Belief System and National Images: John Foster Dulles,” In *Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War: A Book of Readings*, ed. Ralph K. White, 326. New York, NY: New York University Press, 1986.

also true in Arabs' opinions of Americans: "Attitudes toward American values, people, and products remain mostly favorable, but have also declined in the past two years."<sup>62</sup>

Tom Regan takes this blacktop image and makes an opportunity out of it for Bush, noting that since "dislike for Bush or his policies is the biggest factor in ordinary citizens' negative opinion of the United States", it is then "within his power to change that perception."<sup>63</sup> Indeed, a shift in policies is vital. "Sometimes foreigners understand us just fine; they simply don't like what they see. ... some U.S. policies have been, are, and will continue to be major sources of anti-Americanism."<sup>64</sup>

Ahdaf Soueif discusses the importance of American policy: "In the last two decades America's influence on the world and actions in it have become more and more distasteful. And what is unforgivable is that it is all done under the cover of 'freedom', 'democracy' and 'peace'." The most important aspect of those American actions and influence is that of support for Israel. "He did not hate America. ... Yet when I asked him what he thought of the country he indicated that he dismissed it as a lackey of Israel, giving it unlimited military assistance and never censoring its use of US weaponry against innocent civilians."<sup>65</sup> Polls confirm that "Attitudes toward US policy in Iraq and Palestine are extremely low, in the single digit range."<sup>66</sup> With those policies in mind, the Arab outlook is bleak: "At the moment the world dominated by America looks like a pretty nasty place."<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Zogby International, "Impressions of America: 2004," June 2004, 1.

<sup>63</sup> Knap, "What it will Take to Change our Image Abroad," Commentary.

<sup>64</sup> Fred Kaplan, "Karen Hughes Sells Brand America," *Slate Magazine*, March 15, 2005, Section: War Stories.

<sup>65</sup> Shehadeh, "What we Think of America," 74.

<sup>66</sup> Zogby, "Impressions of America: 2004," 1.

<sup>67</sup> Ahdaf Soueif, "What we Think of America," *Granta* 77, London, Spring 2002, 80-81.

In a hopeful attitude, Kaplan suggests that “we may ... be entering a time of unusually ripe opportunity for creative public diplomacy, when people who have generally been hostile to America (because of American policies) might be willing to give an American message at least a listen.”<sup>68</sup> The United States is trying to take advantage of such public diplomacy to change the fact that “Arab hatred of the United States [is at] an all-time high.”<sup>69</sup> The Bush administration has started an American “Arab-language television news channel, Alhurra, to compete with the others that critics say are too anti-American.”<sup>70</sup>

Rhami Khouri, the executive editor of Beirut’s *The Daily Star*, thinks that Alhurra is “a massive, wasted effort.” In addition to the policy, he sees the people as objecting to “the manner in which the United States conducts that policy: ordering people around, threatening them, sending in armies to redraw the map of the region.”<sup>71</sup> These policies and actions are seen as “clear examples of cultural and religious war which will only lead to people’s hatred of US policies ... and will isolate America more than before.”<sup>72</sup>

America’s best hope may be drawn from the fact that the lack of a “definitive world-wide majority” suggests “there may be some underlying openness to repairing relations with the US.”<sup>73</sup> With actions speaking louder than words, American actions of goodwill may be our best hope for a positive image:

Our aid to tsunami victims, by the government and private citizens, is only the latest example of a long record of America helping the afflicted in

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<sup>68</sup> Kaplan, “Karen Hughes Sells Brand America,” War Stories.

<sup>69</sup> Ed Bradley, “The Image War,” *CBS News Transcripts*, May 16, 2004. Available online at: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/05/14/60minutes/main617617.shtml>

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Bradley, “The Image War.”

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Regan, “Poll: World worries about new Bush term”.

earthquakes, floods, fire, famine and disease. We are the Peace Corps, Habitat for Humanity, Doctors Without Borders and Aid for Developing Nations.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Knap, "What it will Take to Change our Image Abroad," Commentary.

## Appendix

### *U.S. Opinion of the World*

#### Data table

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No Opinion
Australia	88	7	5
Great Britain	87	10	3
Canada	87	11	2
Japan	75	20	5
Germany	69	26	5
Mexico	68	27	5
Brazil	66	21	13
India	61	29	10
Russia	59	35	6
Israel	59	35	6
Egypt	58	32	10
France	47	49	4
China	41	54	5
Afghanistan	28	65	7
Saudi Arabia	28	66	6
Cuba	28	67	5
Pakistan	28	64	8
Libya	25	63	12
Iraq	21	74	5
Iran	17	77	6
Palestine Authority	15	76	9
Korea, North	12	83	5

#### Chart

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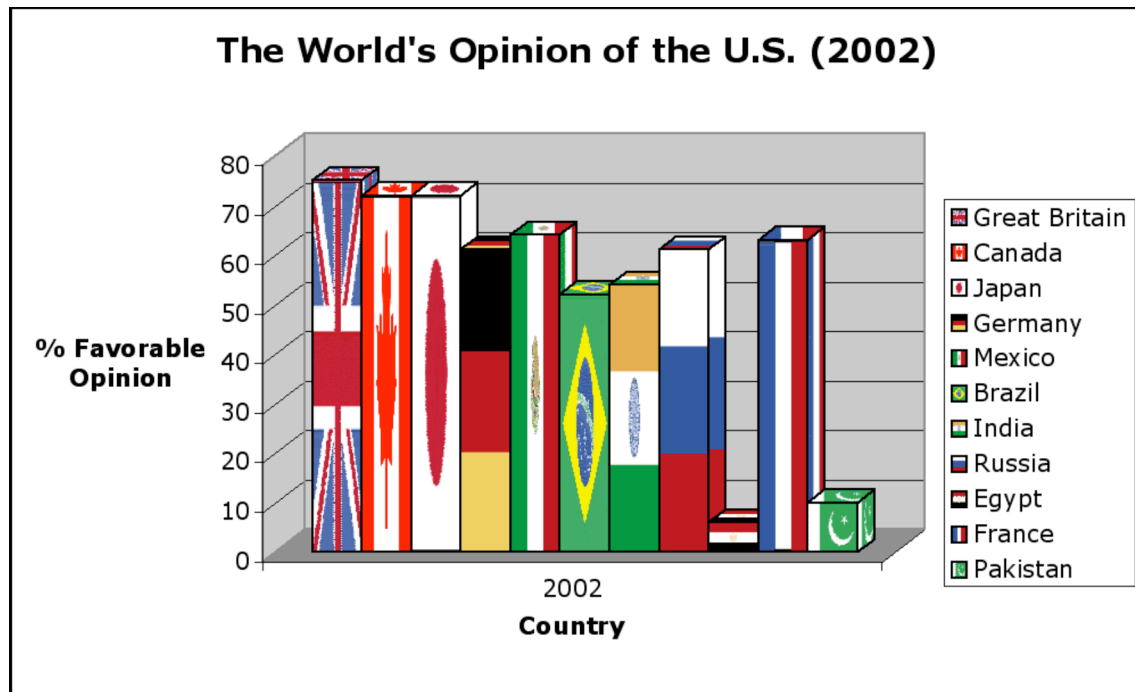
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## ***World Opinion of the U.S.***

### **Data table**

	2002
Great Britain	75
Canada	72
Japan	72
Germany	61
Mexico	64
Brazil	52
India	54
Russia	61
Egypt	6
France	63
Pakistan	10

### **Chart**



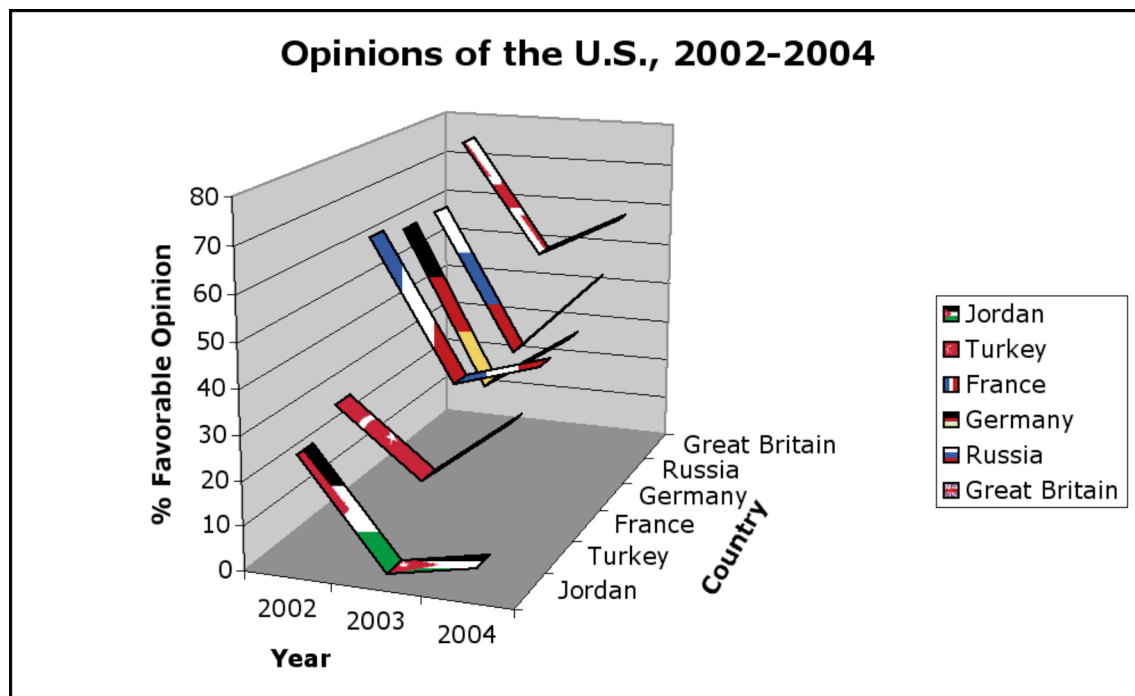
Information from a series of polls done by the Pew Research Center, taken by telephone and in person, with sample sizes averaging 1000 per country. Field Date: 2002

## Opinions of the U.S. Over Time

### Data table

	2002	2003	2004
Jordan	25	1	5
Turkey	30	15	30
France	63	31	37
Germany	61	25	38
Russia	61	28	47
Great Britain	75	48	58

### Chart



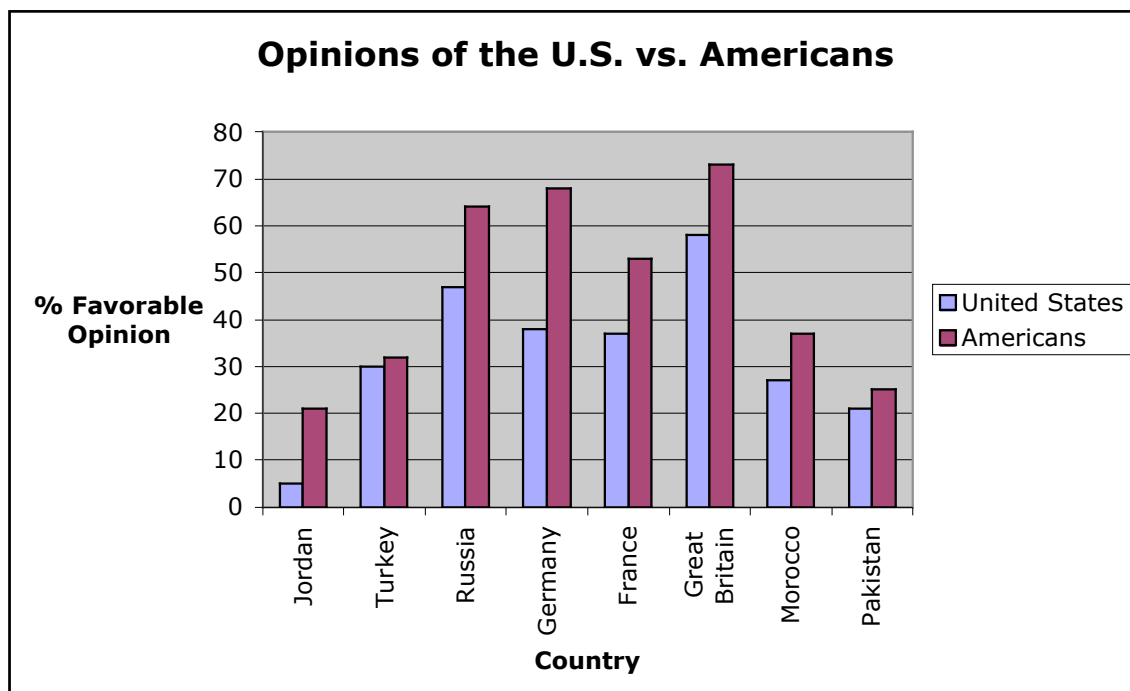
Information from a series of polls done by the Pew Research Center, taken by telephone and in person, with sample sizes averaging 1000 per country. Field Dates: 2002, 2003, 2004.

## ***Opinions of the U.S. vs. Opinions of Americans***

### **Data table**

	United States	Americans
Jordan	5	21
Turkey	30	32
Russia	47	64
Germany	38	68
France	37	53
Great Britain	58	73
Morocco	27	37
Pakistan	21	25

### **Chart**



Information from a series of polls done by the Pew Research Center, taken by telephone and in person, with sample sizes averaging 1000 per country. Field Date: 2004.

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