The Boundaries of Public Diplomacy and Nonstate Actors: A Taxonomy of Perspectives

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Abstract: Public diplomacy (PD) lacks an agreed-upon definition and boundaries. The ambiguity surrounding the conceptualization of the term leads to confusion among scholars and practitioners and hinders the consolidation of PD as an academic field. This article surveys 160 articles and books on PD, categorizes diverse perspectives into a taxonomy, and explores the coherence of each. The taxonomy can be categorized into these perspectives: state-centric, neo-statist, nontraditional, society-centric, and accommodative. The article maps the boundaries of public diplomacy with much needed clear and coherent criteria and positions PD within the broader discipline of international relations.

Resumen: Una definición y límites consensuados es lo que le falta a la diplomacia pública (DP). La ambigüedad del término confunde tanto a académicos como a profesionales, y dificulta la consolidación de la DP como un área de estudio académico. Este trabajo analiza 160 artículos y libros sobre DP, clasifica las distintas perspectivas y explora la coherencia de cada una de ellas. Dicha clasificación incluye las siguientes perspectivas: centrado en el Estado, neoestatismo, no tradicional, centrado en la sociedad y acomodativa. El artículo define los límites de la diplomacia pública mediante criterios claros, coherentes y necesarios, y posiciona a la DP en la disciplina de relaciones internacionales, la cual es más amplia.

Extrait: La diplomatie publique (DP) est dépourvue de consensus quant à sa définition et à sa délimitation. L'ambiguïté dont est empreinte la conceptualisation du terme amène à une confusion parmi les universitaires et les praticiens et empêche la consolidation de la DP en tant que domaine académique. Le présent article est une étude de 160 articles et ouvrages sur la DP, il établit une taxonomie des différentes perspectives diplomatiques et explore la cohérence de chacune d'elles. Les perspectives réunies au sein de cette taxonomie sont les suivantes : école centrée sur l'état, école néo-étatiste, école non traditionnelle, école centrée sur la société et école accommodante. L'article propose une délimitation de la diplomatie publique à l'aide de critères dont la clarté et la cohérence étaient très attendues – et positionne la DP au sein de la discipline élargie des relations internationales.

Keywords: public diplomacy, nonstate actors, taxonomy, diplomacy studies, international relations theories

In his *International Studies Perspectives* article, Murray (2008, 34) raised the confusion caused by the disparity of views on diplomacy. He attempted to "consolidat[e] the gains made in diplomacy studies" by building a taxonomy of diplomatic thoughts (see also Hocking et al. 2012). Murray's article clarified the main discrepancies

between three schools of diplomacy to introduce "order, clarity, and purpose to the diplomatic studies field." His grounded appraisal of diplomatic studies indicates that the major debate in the field is the proper placement of nonstate actors in diplomacy, an issue resulting from their recent rise in world politics.

The field of public diplomacy (PD) begs for a similar taxonomy since the confusion is more frustrating than the case of diplomacy studies. Indeed, this research was initiated to address the frustration of the author's students since each article they read throughout a PD course had discordant definitions of the term. It is argued here that the disparity of perspectives on PD, particularly regarding the place of nonstate actors in this realm, must be "classified and consolidated" (Murray 2008, 23) to have a clearer understanding of what PD is and how it works. This requires a closer look at how articles in the field define PD and on what grounds they differ from each other. Only then can one understand the trends in this realm and negotiate diverse perspectives behind the conceptualization of PD.

This article aims to map the boundaries of PD as an initial step in theory building in this relatively new field. In parallel to diplomatic studies, the central debate in recent PD research concerns the role and place of these new actors (see Huijgh, Gregory, and Melissen 2013). To clarify this subject, this article investigates how scholars conceptualize PD and how they describe the place of nonstate actors in it. An analysis of the diverse approaches to PD leads to a taxonomy of five broad groups:

- State-centric perspectives that restrict PD to state agencies in a coherent way rejecting diplomatic actorness of nonstate actors completely
- Neo-statist perspectives that reserve the term PD for states only, while offering alternative terms such as social *diplomacy* or grassroots *diplomacy* for similar nonstate actor activities
- Nontraditional perspectives that define diplomacy based not on status, but on capabilities, accepting some nonstate actor activities as PD
- Society-centric perspectives that share most traits with nontraditional perspectives, except that they define *public* as people in the global *public* sphere
- Accommodative perspectives that accommodate nonstate actor activities within the realm of PD, but only if those activities meet certain criteria.

Using this taxonomy, PD scholars and practitioners can more precisely identify weaknesses and strengths of each perspective, and this in turn may make future studies more comparable. This article addresses the inconsistencies and analytical problems in each of the five categories. In the last part of the article, coherent criteria for the boundaries of PD are compiled that strengthen the case for the accommodative perspectives category. Accordingly, the argument here ultimately fits in this fifth group.

Based on a SCOPUS search, 185 articles cited five times or more and published from 1985 to July 30, 2017, with the exact term "public diplomacy" in the title, keywords, and/or abstracts were found. In all, 25 of these articles were excluded from the set because it was not possible to identify how the authors conceptualized PD and how they viewed the place of nonstate actors in PD. In some of these excluded articles, PD is used interchangeably with other terms such as "nation branding" or "nation's image" (Van Ham 2008; Peijuan, Ting, and Pang 2009; Dinnie et al. 2010; Chua and Pang 2012), "soft power" (Brown 2008; Wilson 2008), "international public relations" (Lee 2006, 2007; Lee and Hong 2012; Scott 2013), "strategic communication" (Dimitriu 2012), "international broadcasting" (Price 2009), "persuasion" (Van Evera 2006), "propaganda" (Willen 2015), and "pressure politics" (Gorman 2008). The taxonomy in this article is based on an analysis of the remaining 160 articles.

The article begins with a conceptualization of PD, with the goal of positioning its concept within the broader discipline of international relations (IR). The next section discusses how PD scholarship handles nonstate actors. Following this, the third section identifies and offers a taxonomy of five groups of perspectives based on how they view the boundaries of PD. The last section summarizes the findings and offers implications for PD research and practice.

The Concept of Public Diplomacy

PD is classically defined as "the means by which governments, private groups, and individuals influence the attitudes and opinions of other peoples and governments in such a way as to exercise influence on their foreign policy decisions" (Murrow Center 2002; see also Delaney 1968, 3; Malone 1985, 199). Recent literature often referred to as "new public diplomacy" (NPD) (Melissen 2005b; Seib 2009)[1] takes a more two-way approach to PD as "an instrument used by states, associations of states, and some sub-state agencies and non-state actors to understand cultures, attitudes, and behavior; to build and manage relationships; and to influence thoughts and mobilize actions to advance their interests and values" (Gregory 2008b, 276). In line with the literature on NPD, Cull (2008) suggests a taxonomy of PD practices: listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, and international broadcasting. Fitzpatrick (2010) also surveys the PD literature and suggests six main functions: advocacy, communication, relationship management, promotion, political engagement, and warfare.[2] This article uses Gregory's definition, which better reflects the environment of NPD, in recognition of the fact that nonstate actors are more empowered than ever, and more capable and willing to participate in PD-like activities. However, Gregory's definition is also imperfect as it lacks boundaries establishing what PD is not and who PD actors are not. The latter part of this article offers modifications to this definition.

PD can be used as an instrument that cultivates and wields soft power (Nye 2008; see also Hayden 2012), which can be defined as "the power to construct the preferences and images of self and others through ideational or symbolic resources that lead to behavioral changes of others" (Lee 2010, 116; see also Hayden 2012). Why is there a need to engage foreign publics to "influence foreign policy decisions" (Murrow Center 2002) or "to influence thoughts and mobilize actions to advance their interests and values" (Gregory 2008b, 276)? The need to engage foreign publics is mainly due to developments in the last century that empowered individuals and nonstate actors and made them more relevant in world politics. These developments include globalization, which created greater interconnections between people in different countries; technological advancements, which made it easier and less expensive for individuals to travel, communicate, network internationally, and access and produce information; and waves of democratization and liberalization, which made public opinion matter in most societies (see Cull 2009; Zaharna 2010, 81–88; Fitzpatrick 2012, 435).

While the argument above is almost uncontested in any theoretical debates in IR, there are different approaches as to how much and in what ways the empowerment of people and nonstate actors influence the international system. Realists hold that, ultimately, only states can make any difference in the international system. Liberals maintain that states are central to the international system, but key individuals

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[1] Following September 11, 2001, PD evolved into new public diplomacy (NPD), which sought to accommodate new objectives, new actors, and the new environment in which PD is practiced. The debate on the boundaries of PD started with the start of the NPD. Previously, state agencies were perceived as the only initiators of PD, while nonstate actors were seen as just instrumental in achieving state-centric initiatives. Indeed, only eight (4 percent) out of the 185 most-cited articles were written before September 11, 2001, while 177 articles were written after.

[2] Warfare as a function of public diplomacy is problematic, since diplomacy fundamentally concerns avoidance of war.

and nonstate actors have a critical influence in the formation of state behavior (see, e.g., Moravcsik 1997). Therefore, liberals are interested in public diplomacy's potential to build relations and eventually influence key individuals (Nye 2004, 109–10). Constructivists argue that individuals and nonstate actors can play important roles in changing the current discourses in the international system by influencing reconstruction of prevalent ideas, norms, beliefs, and, in turn, the interests of states about their surroundings.

For realists, individuals and nonstate actors, at best, can affect low political issues such as culture and social policies and are not able to make a difference in high political issues such as peace and security. While realist perspectives of PD are discussed in the literature (Yun and Toth 2009), it would be inconsistent and hypocritical for realists to expect significant returns from investment in communication with foreign publics.

On the other hand, Nye and Keohane (1971a, 728–29) argue that "distinctions between high and low politics are of diminishing value" since developments in the last century—noted above—led "[h]igh and low politics [to] become tightly intertwined." Their "world politics paradigm" and issue-areas approaches, common in the transnationalism and global governance literature (see Risse-Kappen 1995; Rosenau 1995; Arts 2003; Peinhardt and Sandler 2015), support the idea that individuals and nonstate actors might matter as much as states or even have more authority in certain issue areas such as global finance, the environment, and human rights (see Rosenau 1997, 407–11; Avant, Finnemore, and Sell 2010, 12–14). Issue-areas approaches explain how investing in PD increases the odds of certain outcomes in specific issue areas in the international or global stage.

Furthermore, the PD objectives of shaping societal and potentially state interests through engaging foreign publics work better with constructivism than with the IR theories associated with rationalism. If the actors that matter in the world politics are assumed to be rational, then there would not be much point in attempting to indirectly manipulate or influencing their decisions by engaging with their publics. On the other hand, if world politics actors are "cognitive actors" who are "purposive, conditioned by bounded rationality and regular cognitive propensities" (Rosati 2000, 73; see also Wendt 1992), then there is room to construct and reconstruct these actors' interests through mediated or interpersonal exposures by employing PD initiatives. Constructivists point out the potential agency of epistemic communities, transnational advocacy networks, and key individuals, as well as international organizations and state agencies, in diffusing ideas and values through transnational and international interactions, which, in turn, lead to reconstructing societal and state interests (Haas 1992; Wendt 1992; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Deacon 2007). PD initiatives are instrumental in achieving such constructivist goals.

Two groups in the taxonomy, the state-centric perspectives and neo-statist perspectives, regard only states' activities as PD, while the other three—the nontraditional, society-centric, and accommodative perspectives—leave the door open for nonstate actor activities to be characterized as PD. The former two are implicitly inclined to view IR from a state-centric perspective with rationalist tendencies and are uneasy about calling nonstate actor activities PD because of this theoretical conviction. Nor are scholars employing these perspectives realists, as they devote their research to a "frivolous and trivial" (Van Ham 2008, 20) kind of diplomacy that engages foreign publics and not official agents of sovereigns. The distinction between the two former perspectives and the latter three is more similar to the division within the constructivist camp over state-centric systemic theories of IR (see Wendt 1999, 353; Hurd 2008, 308; Snidal 2013, 107–9).

Systemic theories of IR, including the "'conventional' strand [of constructivism], which shares the anarchy problematique with neorealists and neoliberals" (Hurd 2008, 309), downplay the role of nonstate actors in world politics. Scholars who hold state-centric PD perspectives share these views. On the other hand, there is more

room for nonstate actors to participate in world politics in issue-areas approaches or what Hurd (2008, 309) refers to as the "post-anarchy strand" of constructivism. Scholars who hold that nonstate actors can also do PD belong to this camp. Indeed, this theoretical division is the most significant cleavage among the PD scholars. The next section introduces the debate regarding the role of nonstate actors in the realm of PD.

Nonstate Actors in the Realm of Public Diplomacy

As noted, a central issue in the field of PD is whether it is exclusively a state-centric practice or if the activities of nonstate actors are also PD. In this article, nonstate actors are viewed as those that are relevant to international relations and operate at the international or transnational level (Arts, Noortmann, and Reinalda 2001; Reinalda 2001, 13; Arts 2003, 5). There is near total agreement in the recent literature that nonstate actors are important to PD, but the question of whether nonstate actor activities should be called PD is answered differently by two camps of PD researchers. While communication scholars (authoring 49 percent of the sample used here) do not mind extending PD activities beyond state agencies, political scientists (34 percent of the sample) are warier of treating nonstate actors as PD actors because of actorness' heavy connotations in IR theories.[3] Some scholars regard nonstate actors as important partners in state-centric PD but not as PD actors per se (Malone 1985; Peterson 2002; Ross 2002; Van Ham 2003; Kennedy and Lucas 2005; Scott-Smith 2006; Pahlavi 2007; Hall 2012), while others treat them as independent actors in their own right (Fitzpatrick 2007; Zaharna 2007; Cowan and Arsenault 2008; Gilboa 2008; Nye 2008; Gregory 2008b, 2011; Ordeix-Rigo and Duarte 2009).

It is widely accepted in the literature that state-centric PD alone falls short of achieving effective PD outcomes, particularly in the long term (Armitage and Nye 2007; Lord 2008; Snow 2008; US Department of State 2010; Zatepilina-Monacell 2010; Attias 2012; Seo 2013; Cabral et al. 2014). The "built-in disadvantage and an inherent weakness" (Attias 2012, 475) of state agencies, namely "public skepticism" (Leonard, Stead, and Smewing 2002, 54) and "distrust" (Payne 2009a, 603; Nye 2004, 113), might be remedied by making use of nonstate actors and individuals on the ground who are more credible in the eyes of the foreign publics engaged (Gilboa 2008, 73, 281–82; Payne 2009a, 604; Rasmussen 2010, 268; Lee and Ayhan 2015, 61). Nonstate actor activities, in collaboration with state agencies or independent of them, complement official efforts for more effective PD outcomes (see Lee and Ayhan 2015 and Zaharna and Uysal 2016).

Nevertheless, most PD scholars do not clearly indicate which nonstate actor activities should be classified as PD and/or what kind of nonstate actors can be labeled as PD actors. This ambiguity regarding the place of nonstate actors impedes the "sunrise of [PD as] an academic field" (Gregory 2008b). The lack of agreement on at least a minimal definition of PD and its boundaries has academic and practical implications.

Diplomacy studies are often considered "short on theory" (Jönsson 2002, 215; see also Der Derian 1987). The field of PD is even shorter as the "[search] for a theory of public diplomacy" continues (Gilboa 2008; Pamment 2017). The greatest obstacle in solidifying a theory of PD, particularly one that concerns the place of nonstate actors, is a deficiency of boundaries. Demarcating boundaries is a requisite for theory building, according to Dubin (1978, 125), who said, "[i]n order that a model may represent an empirical system, it has to have boundaries corresponding

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[3] Fifty-three of the 160 articles (33 percent) were published in three journals: *Public Relations Review* (PRR) (19 articles), *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* (HJD) (18 articles), and *American Behavioral Scientist* (ABS) (16 articles). HJD is much more likely to publish articles that accept nonstate actor activities as PD (72 percent) compared to PRR (32 percent) and ABS (31 percent). Overall, the ratio is 41 percent in all 160 articles.

to the empirical system. The boundaries are important to the specification of any theoretical model." This article lays the foundation for further PD theory-building by mapping the much-needed boundaries of PD with distinct criteria.

There are also practical implications of blurry boundaries. Failure to build a common understanding of nonstate actors' roles in PD has impeded any realization of the untapped potential of nonstate actors. Further, empirical research on nonstate actor activities related to PD should be generalizable to certain types of nonstate actors (Vakil 1997, 2057), and this requires boundaries. While this article is an initial step in the larger research project, building this typology of PD actors is beyond the scope of this article. Lacking these boundaries, we end up treating all kinds of transnational activities of nonstate actors under the banner of nonstate PD that indeed have nothing in common except for not being initiated by state agencies.

In significant studies, nonstate actor activities that have unintentional consequences and no clear PD agendas are referred to as nonstate PD (see Leonard et al. 2002; Nye 2004; Hocking 2005; Riordan 2005; Sharp 2005; Melissen 2005a; Gilboa 2008; Kelley 2009; L'Etang 2009; Seib 2009; Szondi 2009; Zaharna 2010; Van Ham 2013; d'Hooghe 2015). These scholars refer to nonstate PD superficially without providing details and the criteria to make nonstate actor activities PD. However, in the case of most nonstate actors, their engagement in PD is rather unintentional as they contribute to outcomes for others (e.g., their home countries' ministry of foreign affairs) without having a prioritized PD agenda. In other words, for this literature, most nonstate actors do not have PD agendas, but the outcomes of their activities may overlap with some states' PD objectives. The unintentional contributions of nonstate actors are significant and must be analyzed to explore untapped potential. However, for the sake of analytical clarity, these activities should be regarded as unintentional contributions rather than as PD activities per se.[4]

If there are no clear boundaries to distinguish the intentional from unintentional PD objectives of nonstate actors, then every transnational communication of every entity can fall into the realm of PD (La Porte 2012, 449). Some scholars mention the problem of the blurry boundaries of PD but offer little or no insights into this issue (Henderson 1973, XXI-XXVII; Zöllner 2009, 266; Brown 2013b, 53; Fitzpatrick, Fullerton, and Kendrick 2013, 36; Melissen 2013, 449; Wiseman 2015, 13, 298). The taxonomy in the next section aims to address the issue of an unconsolidated definition of PD by attempting a research appraisal of the field and mapping the boundaries.

A Taxonomy of Public Diplomacy Perspectives

In this section, 160 articles are categorized into a taxonomy of five groups of perspectives. The conceptualizations of public diplomacy, particularly meanings of *public* and *diplomacy* in these articles are investigated. Furthermore, the articles are analyzed with an eye to whether they treat nonstate actor activities as PD, and if they do, whether any boundaries determine what is and is not PD. Where boundaries of PD are not clear, the conceptualizations of PD are not analytically coherent, but rather vague. In the last part of this section, the criteria for analytical boundaries of PD are compiled and summarized.

State-Centric Perspectives

Out of 160 articles, 94 articles defined PD in state-centric terms without any reference to nonstate actor activities. The most common definition used in these studies is that of Tuch (1990, 3), who defines PD as "a government's process of

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[4] See Zatepilina-Monacell's (2009; 2010; 2012) work, among others, for an example of NGOs' unintentional contributions to the United States' PD.

communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies." However, none of the articles explicitly argued that nonstate actor activities cannot be regarded as PD. Most of these articles empirically analyzed a governmental PD initiative with a state-centric definition of PD without any reference to nonstate actors. Golan (2015, 417), in his extended chapter based on his earlier work (Golan 2013), emphasizes that his "definition of public diplomacy is government biased," as he considers "government as the primary organization and foreign publics as the primary publics." Brown (2013a) holds that PD "is the way that it is because it is done by states," and he does not treat nonstate actor activities as PD "unless they are acting on behalf of states."

Those against the idea of referring to nonstate actor activities as PD have two types of reservations. The first and most common type of reservation is that public *diplomacy* is a kind of *diplomacy* that requires *status* to practice it. The second type of reservation, which is not mainstream, is that the *public* in *public* diplomacy implies state agencies as the subject of the initiative. In order to address these two reservations, we need to disaggregate the term *public diplomacy* into its components.

The first type of reservation is about the word *diplomacy* in public diplomacy. Scholars who refuse to recognize nonstate actor activities as PD do so particularly based on what the word *diplomacy* entails. For these scholars, nonstate actor activities are not PD or any kind of *diplomacy* for that matter, since nonstate actor activities "have little to do with the functions and objectives of diplomacy" (Hocking et al. 2012, 10).[5] In a similar vein, McDowell (2008, 10) contends that the word "diplomacy" entails "a role for the state," while the word "public" refers to the people rather than the state, because PD "takes place in public." He accepts that nonstate actors conduct similar activities without government direction, but argues that these activities cannot be regarded as PD if there is no government direction to achieve particular goals.[6]

If one agrees that diplomacy requires *status*, then for consistency's sake, one should avoid using terms such as social diplomacy and people-to-people diplomacy for nonstate actor activities. Sending, Pouliot, and Neumann (2011, 536) argue that while some NGOs might be performing "some elements of diplomatic practice," which are "negotiation, representation, information-gathering, and communication," they are not performing all of them and their activities cannot be treated as diplomacy, which "is an institutionalized feature of the state system." In a similar vein, Sharp (1997, 630–31) argues that diplomats' representation of their states has political significance beyond symbolic meaning, and no profession, however capable it is thought to be, would be able to replace it and be as effective as diplomats. These categoric rejections of nonstate PD fit into the state-centric perspectives in the taxonomy. These approaches to PD are similar to the Traditional School of Diplomacy, in Murray's (2008, 28) taxonomy, which "emphasize the centrality of the state to diplomacy."

Neo-Statist Perspectives

While 92 out of 94 articles reviewed categorically reject nonstate actor activities in the realm of PD, two articles suggest alternative terms for nonstate actors' PD-like activities. Lam (2007) refers to the British Premier League's influence in China as "informal public diplomacy," while adopting a state-centric understanding of PD. Furthermore, Sevin, Kimball, and Khalil (2011) suggest using Payne's

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[5] While Hocking et al. (2012, 20) question vague usage of *diplomacy*, their categorization of *diplomatic* domains into intergovernmental, multi-layered, private, and loose coupling begs the same question of which (shared) processes and practices in these domains have to do with the functions and objectives of diplomacy.

[6] For a similar discussion, see Potter (2008, 33–34).

"grassroots diplomacy" (Payne 2009b; see also Payne, Sevin, and Bruya 2011) and Czubek's "social diplomacy" (Czubek 2002; see also Sevin and Salcıgil White 2011; Van Doeveren 2011) as alternatives to "public diplomacy" for nonstate actor activities. Like Czubek, Van Doeveren (2011, 18–19) distinguishes between "public diplomacy," which is "a component of national diplomatic practice," and "social diplomacy," which "refers to the activity that pursues PD goals but that moves beyond the confined limits of diplomats."

These suggestions represent the second reservation concerning the use of the term PD for the activities of nonstate actors. This reservation stems from the term *public*: does *public* refer to those on the receiving end, the foreign publics who are addressed, or does it refer to the subject of PD, state agencies? Almost all articles in the sample, except two (Castells 2008; Lindholm and Olsson 2011), explicitly or implicitly define the *public* in PD as the foreign publics who are the target audiences or stakeholders. However, the terms "social diplomacy," "informal public diplomacy," and "grassroots diplomacy" are suggested as alternatives to nonstate PD, which shows discontent with the word *public*. These alternative terms have the term *diplomacy* in common, yet it is not clear why the PD-like activities of nonstate actors cannot be simply labeled PD but must be termed "something-else" diplomacy.[7] Alternative notions of nonstate diplomacy in this mold fit within the neo-statist perspectives in the taxonomy, as they feature a rather state-centric understanding of PD, and reserve the term *public*, but not necessarily the term *diplomacy*, for state agencies. Proponents of alternative terms for nonstate PD offer only a vague distinction between what is PD and what is not. Their approaches lack conceptual clarity compared to the more rigid boundaries provided by state-centric perspectives, above, and accommodative perspectives, below.

From an analytical standpoint, state-centric perspectives are more coherent than are neo-statist perspectives, but they are similarly outdated because of their insistence on not recognizing nonstate actors as PD actors. The argument against these state-centric perspectives derives from an analysis of the nontraditional, society-centric, and accommodative perspectives below.

Nontraditional Perspectives

Many scholars tackled the first reservation by defining diplomatic action not by the *status* but by the *capabilities* of the actors (Sharp 1999, 51, 55; Jönsson 2008, 34; Scholte 2008, 55–56; Kelley 2010, 288; Hocking et al. 2012, 38, 52; Henrikson 2013, 120; Kelley 2014; Henders and Young 2016, 333–34; Young and Henders 2016, 355–56).[8] Kelley's (2010) argument that nonstate actors are now nonstate diplomatic actors (NDAs), beyond being new actors in PD, is cited in some of these articles. According to Kelley, NDA actions lead to disruption of traditional diplomacy and give way to a new diplomacy characterized by "agency change" (Kelley 2014). Kelley argues for defining diplomacy as the diplomacy of *capabilities* as opposed to the diplomacy of *status*. NDAs do not have the legal *status* to represent their states as diplomats, but they have diplomatic *capabilities* and sources of legitimate representation that make them actors in the field of diplomacy, thereby disrupting the state monopoly on diplomacy. In a similar vein, but in contrast to his 1997 view cited above, Sharp (1999, 55) argues "it is becoming increasingly plausible to claim that more people are so employed and more are 'diplomats' . . . viewing diplomacy as representation."

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[7] For similar observations, see Hayden (2011b) and Riordan (2017).

[8] Scholars have used various other terms to refer to this phenomenon making similar arguments including diplomacy of behavior, diplomacy of effectiveness, diplomacy of expressiveness, diplomacy as representation, process-based diplomacy, and practices-based diplomacy, among others.

The arguments regarding the diplomacy of capabilities imply that the borders of diplomacy are blurred, and diplomatic action is highly decentralized and relocated partially to nonstate actors such as NGOs and transnational advocacy networks (Rosenau 1997, 44, 61–64; Hocking 2004, 149–50; Kelley 2014, 19, 108). These scholars argue that PD "exists wherever its core capabilities are to be found, which requires extending the identification of [its actors] beyond simply who they are to include what they do" (Kelley 2014, 101).[9] In turn, exclusive state monopoly on diplomatic activities, including PD activities, is ended as nonstate actors become more active and matter more in transnational affairs (Weiss 2000, 810; Melissen 2005a, 22–25; Ronfeldt and Arquilla 2007; Hocking et al. 2012, 10–23; Kelley 2014).

Although nonstate actors are "becoming more important than states as initiators of change," it is still implausible to suggest that nonstate actors have become units of analysis in the "*inter*-national" system, since "system change ultimately happens *through* states" (Wendt 1999, 9, 353). Similarly, Sending and Neumann (2006, 657; see also Van Rooy 1999; Kleiner 2008) argue that nonstate actors have become the subject of governance in addition to long being an object as they now engage in the "shaping and carrying out [of] global governance functions." However, this does not imply power transfer from the state to nonstate actors in a zero-sum way; rather, it is better explained by "political power operat[ing] through" civil society (Sending and Neumann 2006, 658). This argument is the main difference between the traditionalist camp (state-centric and neo-statist perspectives), which emphasize nonstate actors as potential partners in state-led PD, and the nontraditional camp (nontraditional, society-centric, and accommodative perspectives), which hold that nonstate actors can also conduct PD independently.

Still, arguing for the diplomatic actorness of nonstate actors does not mean actorness in the international system. After all, diplomacy is but one way that states, and nonstate actors, interact in the system. Actorness in PD, which deals more with low politics issues such as culture and people-to-people exchanges, is a weaker and hence more acceptable claim than diplomatic actorness, and obviously more acceptable than being an actor in the international system.

Nonetheless, the diplomacy of capabilities approach holds two risks. First, following this logic, almost any transnational interaction can be called PD (Wiseman 2015, 298–99; Gregory 2016, 3–4). Having authority based on expertise or capabilities may make a nonstate actor a significant component of fuzzier and broader global governance, yet (public) diplomatic actorness is a far-fetched claim. Gregory (2016, 15) maps the boundary between diplomacy and governance very neatly, stating "[d]iplomacy, in contrast to governance, refers to the communication and representation activities through which governance actors manage their relationships and achieve governance-related outcomes."

Second, justifying nonstate actor activities as PD based on capabilities, effectiveness, and representation alone is quite subjective. It is also possible to question the representativeness of nonstate actors—in terms of representing societies—since nonstate actors lack "democratic legitimacy" and "internal democracy" (Riordan 2008, 140; see also Anderson 2000, 112–19; Kelley 2014, 25). Nonstate actors are not accountable to the public at large and often advocate for particular interests only. A possible way to address this risk is to add one more criterion to PD, which is that nonstate actors should be accountable to the public interests of a society, rather than private interests only (Gregory 2016).

Gregory (2016) implicitly distinguishes between public interests and private interests by drawing the line between operational NGOs and advocacy NGOs

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[9] For more on diplomatic capabilities or functions, see Cooper and Hocking (2000), Jönsson and Hall (2003), Murray (2008), Neumann (2008), Sending, Pouliot, and Neumann (2011), Henders and Young (2016), and Young and Henders (2016); for PD functions, see Leonard et al. (2002), Cull (2008), Gregory (2008b), Kelley (2009), and Fitzpatrick (2010).

(Malena 1995, 14). For Gregory, while Doctors Without Borders (MSF), an operational NGO, is doing PD for public interests, Amnesty International (AI), an advocacy NGO, is not doing PD because, in AI's case, "private interests dominate" (Gregory 2016, 13, 23–24). There are two problems with Gregory's distinction between public interests and private interests. First, Gregory's definition of public interests is arbitrary. His argument is parallel to the idea that interests of the public "should be defined more in society-wide than state-centric terms" (Ronfeldt and Arquilla 2007, 6), and so advocacy NGOs' activities serve private interests. Neither MSF nor AI is delegated by the public to conduct their activities, but both are interested in producing collective benefits beyond the private interests of their boards and constituents. While both lack delegation-based accountability, they might have some participation-based accountability (Grant and Keohane 2005; see also Pigman 2014, 95–96). Therefore, advocacy NGOs are as suitable as operational NGOs to conduct PD as far as the criterion of pursuing public interests is concerned.[10] Second, operational NGOs' main function is service provision, while advocacy NGOs' main function is communication with publics. Therefore, contrary to Gregory's boundaries, advocacy NGOs are more likely to do PD than operational NGOs because of their communication function. The vitality of the communication function in PD is discussed under the accommodative perspectives category below.

Those who advocate for diplomacy of behavior treat nonstate actor activities as (public) diplomacy based on the understanding that diplomacy exists whenever "there are boundaries for identity and those boundaries of identity are crossed" (Constantinou 1996, 113; see also Der Derian 1987). Such logic opens wide the gates of (public) diplomacy. Using this vague conceptualization, a wide range of activities can be called (public) diplomacy. If this approach is used without clearer boundaries of PD, the term loses its analytical value. This uncertainty over the boundaries of PD puts such views in the nontraditional perspectives of the taxonomy. In that respect, these perspectives resonate to the nascent school of diplomacy, in Murray's (2008, 29) taxonomy, which "emerged to challenge" state-centric perspectives. Nontraditional perspectives are inclined to be more normative and idealist as a reaction to the earlier two perspectives, which give little weight to nonstate actors.

Society-Centric Perspectives

Society-centric perspectives share the most traits with nontraditional perspectives, except for the definition of *public*. Castells' (2008) article, the most cited article in the sample (267 times), is the primary example. While other articles in the sample view *public* as foreign publics, Castells interpret *public* as social actors who conduct PD in the global *public* sphere. Based on Castells' conceptualization of PD, Lindholm and Olsson (2011, 255) also "understand the notion of public in terms of both organized nonstate actors as well as the general public." Castells argues that PD is not government diplomacy since there is no need for a new term for that, but "public diplomacy is the diplomacy *of* the public, that is, the projection in the international arena of the values and ideas of the public" (Castells 2008, 91; emphasis added; see also Hocking 2005, 32). He contends that the public sphere acts as a "communication space in which a new, common language could emerge as a precondition for diplomacy" (Castells 2008, 91). In line with nontraditional perspectives, Castells also does not make clear which activities of which social actors are PD and which are not. According to this view, all "networked communication and shared meaning" (Castells 2008, 91) in the international arena is PD. Accommodative perspectives, explained next, offer criteria for exclusivity and thereby provide more analytical value to the boundaries of PD.

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[10] For operationalization of public interests pursued by an advocacy NGO, see Ayhan (2018).

Accommodative Perspectives

Another answer to the question of where one draws boundaries comes from asking whether PD should be defined by the actor who practices it or by the object of the action. Gregory (2008a, 245–46) questions whether nonstate actor activities "in support of governance interests and values" should be given a different name when they attempt "to understand, engage, and influence" global publics, while the same activities by states are termed PD.

La Porte's work (2012) is representative of the accommodative perspectives. She suggests that in the past PD was defined by the subject, but now it should be defined by the object of the action. La Porte bases her arguments on Gregory's (2008b, 276; 2011, 355) objective-based definition of PD, which lists "understanding, planning, engagement, and advocacy" as PD's core concepts regardless of the host of the initiative. She attributes PD actorness to nonstate actors that have legitimacy, defined as confidence and support from constituents, and effectiveness, defined as effective satisfaction of the constituents. Arguing that Gregory's approach lacks clear boundaries, La Porte (2012, 449–50; see also Hayden 2009) proposes two conditions to qualify nonstate actors as legitimate nonstate PD actors: nonstate actors must be minimally institutionalized, understood as "hav[ing] a basic organization, clear objectives, stable representation, and coordinated activity," and have a political agenda, understood as "desir[ing] to have a permanent influence on policies, procedures, and international relations."

Similarly, in a rare attempt to "[map] the boundaries" between "diplomacy and civil society" and "diplomacy and global governance," Gregory (2016, 13–14) argues that nonstate actors can be regarded as actors in "diplomacy's public dimension" when their political activities and goals are intentional and serve "governance and public interests rather than private interests." Gregory (2016) does not address La Porte's criticisms of his earlier works (Gregory 2008b; 2011) and leaves a gap in the two authors' attempt to draw the boundaries of PD. This gap is discussed below.

Another significant condition for distinguishing PD activities from unintentional contributions to PD outcomes is intentionality. While the exercise of soft power, or power in general, may sometimes be unintentional (Arts 2003; Nye 2004; Barnett and Duvall 2005), PD is an intentional policy tool. As such, any definition of PD must be "concerned with purposive acts, not tacit arrangements" (Finkelstein 1995, 369). In other words, the main difference between PD and "other channels . . . through which ideas travel, including commercial relations and private communications" is "the intention to direct specific ideas at specific targets for specific political goals" (Scott-Smith 2008, 186). Therefore, intentionality should be a prerequisite for activities to be PD and initiators of the activities to be attributed PD actorness.

In addition to being intentional and politically motivated, PD activity should involve communication as a primary function since PD "operates through essentially communicative practices" (Rasmussen 2009, 266; see also Gilboa 2002, 83; Jönsson and Hall 2003; Wang 2006, 42; Van Ham 2010, 116; La Porte 2015, 130). Following this logic, transnational transactions that lack a communication function should not be recognized as PD.[11]

Furthermore, this communication must address *estranged* foreign publics and/or transnational communities to achieve PD objectives. Soft power may also target domestic audiences to augment the popularity of a government or a leader or to maintain the unity of a political entity (Lee 2010). On the other hand, in PD's domestic dimension citizens can become legitimate stakeholders who participate in policy-making and the practice of PD (Huijgh 2013; Melissen 2013); however, they cannot be a target audience per se. If there is no "estrangement" (Der Derian 1987; see also Constantinou 1996, 113) between the hosts of the PD initiative and the public,

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[11] For the intersection between development (particularly development communication) and PD, see Pamment (2015; 2016a; 2016b).

what is being practiced is simply political or strategic communication and not PD. For example, while China's addressing of domestic constituents could be part of China's two-level (domestic/ international) soft power strategy (see Lee 2010), it should not be regarded as diplomacy or PD due to the lack of estrangement (c.f. Wang 2008; Manzenreiter 2010; Zappone 2012).

One question requires clarification regarding the word *diplomacy* in PD. What is the nexus between diplomacy, or PD, and foreign policy? In some languages, "diplomacy" has been a synonym for "foreign policy" while a general understanding is that the former is a "means by which such policies are implemented" (Hocking and Lee 2011, 659; see also Nicolson 1988, 3; Clinton 2011). Nevertheless, it is impossible to conceptualize *diplomacy* and *PD* without considering its relationship to foreign policy.[12]

Cull (2013, 125) defines PD as "the conduct of foreign policy by engagement with a foreign public." In a similar vein, Rasmussen (2010, 263) conceptualizes PD "as a modality of diplomacy that seeks to influence foreign political discourses." In her comprehensive definition of PD, Zatepilina-Monacell argues that "*ultimately*, public diplomacy seeks to influence" foreign policies of other governments by influencing their citizens' opinions (2009, 156, emphasis added; see also Malone 1988; Tuch 1990; Manheim 1994; Armstrong 2008).

In addition to influencing the foreign policies of other governments, one of the main objectives of PD has always been communicating a country's foreign policies to make these policies more effective and accepted by foreign publics (Murrow Center 2002; Proedrou and Frangonikolopoulos 2012, 729; Pamment 2012, 313). In the global arena, countries also employ PD in parallel with their foreign policies "to gain influence and shape [the international] agenda," sometimes, particularly in the case of small and middle power countries,[13] "in ways that go beyond their limited hard power resources" (Bátora 2005, 1). PD objectives may also be connected to economic-related foreign policies such as attracting more tourists, international students, and foreign direct investment to boost the nation-brand of the country.

Furthermore, PD initiatives can go beyond national interests of particular nations, but still pursue political goals in line with foreign policies or political discourses. Zhang and Swartz (2009, 383) add a fourth dimension of PD: the promotion of global public goods such as "global efforts to prevent global warming, to form International Criminal Court and to prevent influenza pandemic." Transnational advocacy networks also promote foreign policy or discourse changes using communication tools. An important example is the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which started as a transnational nongovernmental initiative seeking a complete ban on antipersonnel landmines by all states, a political goal tied to a significant pillar of foreign policy—defense (see Zaharna 2007, 2013).

Byrne (2016, 117) does not consider programs that are "disconnected from foreign policy ideas" as PD. She points out that Australia's New Colombo Plan is distinct from its predecessors as it is the first student mobility program designed as part of Australia's foreign policy portfolio. When PD is detached from foreign policy, it "loses its commonsense meaning and becomes something else" (Wiseman 2015, 298). Furthermore, if PD is not analytically tied to foreign policy, the Gezi Park protests can be labeled as PD (Zaharna and Uysal 2016, 114), and the Internet Corporation on Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) can be called a PD actor (Gregory 2016, 13), depriving the term of its conceptual value.

In their seminal work on transnational relations and world politics, Nye and Keohane (1971b, 345) define political behavior as activities "to achieve the modification of other actors' behavior." One of the most ambitious goals of PD is to attempt the modification of other actors' foreign policy behaviors. Less ambitious

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[12] For more on the relationship between PD and foreign policy, see Hayden (2011a) and Sevin (2017).

[13] For more on niche diplomacy of small and medium power countries, see Bátora (2005) and Henrikson (2005).

Table 1. Public diplomacy perspectives by definition

| | | | Diplomacy | |
			of status	of capabilities
Public	as subject	Vague boundaries	Neo-statist perspectives	Society-centric perspectives
	as foreign public	Vague boundaries		Nontraditional perspectives
		Analytical boundaries	State-centric perspectives	Accommodative perspectives

goals, such as the economy-related goals mentioned above, attempt individual-level attitude-behavior changes in the interests of the PD actor. Furthermore, activities necessary to achieve these, ambitious or less ambitious, objectives need to be purposive and involve communication that transcends boundaries for them to be PD.

It is possible to offer a list of attributes for delineating the boundaries of PD and PD activities as derived from the broader survey and situated within the accommodative perspectives. This list might be useful in stimulating further discussion.[14] First, PD actors must be institutionalized at least to some extent (La Porte 2012, 449). Second, PD activities must have intentional PD objectives (Scott-Smith 2008, 186; Gregory 2016, 13) such as "understand[ing] cultures, attitudes, and behavior; build[ing] and manag[ing] relationships; and influenc[ing] opinions and actions to advance their interests and values" (Gregory 2008b, 276). Third, the activities must have political goals (Hayden 2009; La Porte 2012) and be connected to foreign policies (Rasmussen 2010; Cull 2013; Byrne 2016) that either contribute to a PD agenda of a government or influence foreign policy changes of governments. Fourth, communication with foreign publics or the international community must be the main tool of the initiative (Jönsson and Hall 2003; Rasmussen 2009).[15] And, fifth, the initiatives must be for public rather than private interests (Peterson 1992; Hemery 2005; Ronfeldt and Arquilla 2007; Castells 2008; Gregory 2016).

Conclusion: Implications for Research and Practice

PD is a recent academic field that lacks a unified understanding of what it is and who its actors are. If there is to be a meaningful debate in the field, there must be a consensus at least on a minimal definition of PD and its related actors. This requires a closer look at how articles in the field define PD and how they differ from each other. This article analyzed and categorized disparate perspectives about the concept. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the findings of this article. The findings suggested five groups of perspectives. Three of them, the neo-statist, nontraditional, and society-centric perspectives, are not clear conceptually. The other two, the state-centric and accommodative perspectives are more analytically coherent.

In summary, the state-centric and neo-statist perspectives argue that PD is state-centric. The former claims that public *diplomacy* requires an official status and reject nonstate actor activities as PD, while the latter suggests alternative *diplomacy* terms for nonstate actors' PD-like transnational activities. In contrast, the nontraditional, society-centric, and accommodative perspectives regard some nonstate actor activities as PD. State-centric definitions do not acknowledge the changing environment in which nonstate actors increasingly employ PD strategies to achieve diplomatic goals through using their capabilities. Nontraditional perspectives developed as a response to this denial and make the case that nonstate actors are new players in

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[14] I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

[15] Either way, "estrangement" (Der Derian 1987; see also Constantinou 1996, 113) must exist between the host of the initiative and the publics/stakeholders.

Table 2. Taxonomy of public diplomacy perspectives

	State-centric perspectives	*Neo-statist perspectives*	*Nontraditional perspectives*	*Society-centric perspectives*	*Accommodative perspectives*
Primary examples	Dutta-Bergman 2006; Cull 2013	Lam 2007; Sevin, Kimball, and Khalil 2011	Gilboa 2008; Nye 2008	Castells 2008; Lindholm and Olsson 2011	Scott-Smith 2008; La Porte 2012
Theoretical tendencies	Rationalism, conventional constructivism	Rationalism, conventional constructivism	Postanarchy strand of constructivism (issue-areas approach), idealism	Postanarchy strand of constructivism (issue-areas approach), idealism	Postanarchy strand of constructivism (issue-areas approach)
Public as	Foreign public	Foreign public and/or subject of PD	Foreign public	Subject of PD (people in the public sphere)	Foreign public
Conditions for PD	Diplomatic status, engagement with foreign publics, political agenda, public interest, intention	Diplomatic status, engagement with foreign publics, political agenda, public interest, intention	Diplomatic capabilities and represen-tation, engagement with foreign and domestic publics	Diplomatic capabilities and represen-tation, engagement with foreign and domestic publics	Legitimacy, effectiveness, political agenda, intention, public interest, estrangement, connection to foreign policies
Nonstate actors as PD actors	No, nonstate actor activities can be seen as PD only if state agencies direct them	No, nonstate actor activities can be regarded as social or grassroots diplomacy	Yes, if nonstate actors are capable of engaging in PD initiatives	Nonstate actors are primary actors of PD	Yes, only if nonstate actors meet conditions above
Boundaries of PD	Analytically coherent	Vague	Vague	Vague	Analytically coherent
Count	92 (57.5%)	2 (1.3%)	60 (42.9%)	2 (1.3%)	4 (2.5%)

the diplomatic field. Although similar to nontraditional perspectives, society-centric perspectives have a more radical approach, claiming that public diplomacy's very subject is people and nonstate actors in the global public sphere. Where the non-traditional and society-centric perspectives might be criticized as naïve, the accommodative perspectives take a step back and suggest working criteria to include non-state actors and their activities in PD.

This article suggests several implications for further research. The taxonomy of PD perspectives in this article has introduced more lucidity and coherence for PD studies. This is the first attempt to produce a comprehensive research appraisal in the field of PD. Hence, this article reflects trends in PD research. Furthermore, this taxonomy can guide further research on PD and help authors orient their conceptualizations of the term more coherently and consistently by negotiating disparate perspectives behind the definition of PD. Future studies can benefit from this article to form more structural conceptualizations and related justifications.

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