THE DRIFT IN THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP: CAUSES OF GROWING EUROPEAN ANTI-AMERICANISM

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ABSTRACT

REBECCA SIVY: The Drift in the Transatlantic Relationship: Causes of Growing European Anti-Americanism
(Under the direction of Milada Vachudova)

Since the end of WWII, the prevalence and salience of anti-Americanism has waxed and waned across Europe. However, this sentiment has never permeated the masses—until recently. At the turn of the 21st century, European anti-Americanism drastically rises. Investigations into the declining American popularity have revealed record high disapproval ratings for the US. Europeans are finding the US and Americans more unfavorable and untrustworthy. What could have caused of such a drastic shift? The Bush administration has always been highly unpopular throughout Europe. Therefore, an examination of its foreign policy initiatives and public diplomacy efforts could shed some light on not only the causes of rising anti-Americanism, but also the permanence of this shift.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The entering of the United States into WWII to fight alongside the allies marked the beginning of a continued American presence on the European continent. The US poured resources into Europe through the Marshall Plan to help rebuild destitute Western Europe. While the US rose to power in the West, the Soviet menace ascended in the East. In order to contain this threat, the Americans needed to form a close partnership with Western Europe. During the Cold War, the US increased its impact by extending its military capabilities, political clout, and cultural influence. Europe was a strategic location for the Americans—the front lines in the fight against the Soviet Union. However, once the Berlin Wall fell, it seemed as though America no longer needed to maintain its close relationship with Europe.

Yet the US continued to reach out to its partners across the Atlantic throughout the 1990s. During this period, the EU and the US were able to focus their energy on domestic issues, such as Americans promoting economic growth during the technology “dot.com” boom, and Europeans pursuing further integration through the Economic and Monetary Union. Even though the US and the EU made their own economic policies a top priority, they both still highly valued and understood the importance of a close transatlantic relationship. This relationship
had held a relatively positive and prominent place in the public opinions of both Americans and Europeans not only during the Cold War, but also throughout the post-Cold War period. The general European population felt favorable towards the US and its leadership in world affairs. Even if anti-American sentiment waxed and waned over time, it never became the majority opinion.

However, this all changed after 9/11 when President Bush pursued an aggressive and unilateral war against terrorism. Positive feelings in European public opinion were replaced with negative net attitudes for the first time in history. While some scholars and politicians believe this downturn was simply a natural fluctuation in public opinion, others found it problematic to the future of the transatlantic relationship. In this thesis, I identify causes of this recent rise in anti-Americanism and explain how this increase in negative opinion is different from changes in previous periods.

I have divided my thesis into four parts. The first section outlines the results of various public opinion surveys. I analyze the popularity of the US and Americans from the end of the WWII until today. This overview provides insight into the recent rise of anti-Americanism.

In the second section, I define anti-Americanism—its origins, its complexity, and its significance. Then I explain the historical pervasiveness of this attitude by focusing on three key periods: the Cold War era (1945-1989); the post-Cold War era (1989-2000); and, the threat of terrorism in the 21st century. The purpose of this section is to offer a comprehensive background on European anti-Americanism.
Understanding the historical context makes the difference between former and contemporary anti-American sentiment more apparent.

The third section focuses on the possible causes of rising anti-Americanism since 2000. Since foreign policy exerts the strongest influence on public opinion, I first examine the Bush Administration’s foreign policy. Although many of his policies were unpopular, I have chosen to focus on three specific cases: the Bush administration’s stance on climate change as evidenced by its rejection of the Kyoto Protocol; the disregard of the UN as seen by the unilateral US invasion of Iraq; and, the human rights violations as seen by the inhumane treatment at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and CIA cells throughout the world. The purpose of focusing on these specific cases is to demonstrate how negative public opinion across Europe is becoming deeper and stronger. Then I turn to the second strongest influencer of public opinion—public diplomacy. I briefly explain the history of public diplomacy efforts throughout Europe during the Cold War and discuss the implications of the abolition of the USIA and evolution of public diplomacy in the post-Cold War era. The purpose of this section is to explore a contributing factor to the rising anti-American sentiment.

The final section offers concluding remarks and possible implications of this change in public opinion. The purpose of this final section is to solidify my argument that European public opinion has been permanently altered, and introduce arising implications of this shift on the transatlantic relationship.
CHAPTER 2

TRENDS IN ANTI-AMERICANISM: ANALYZING OPINION POLLS, 1945 TO 2007

Before developing my argument, I would like to present the facts about anti-Americanism in European public opinion. This attitude is complex and variable, and historically, it has permeated only a small segment of the European population. Public opinion polls illustrate overall favorable attitudes towards the US and Americans throughout the 20th century. Yet these trends have changed since 2000. Negative feelings seem to be deepening and intensifying instead of bouncing back.

In this overview, I offer concrete examples from recent surveys, which confirm this change in public opinion and illustrate how the recent rise in anti-Americanism is different from previous periods.

Looking first at this attitude’s complexity and variability, anti-Americanism has three major characteristics. The first characteristic\(^1\) is how this attitude varies across countries. In order to understand a particular country's overall level of anti-American sentiment, Pierangelo Isernia has analyzed several public opinion surveys from 1954 to 2004 (2007). In his analysis, he looks at the trends in net attitudes for a given country over the given time period. The higher overall level of percentage points indicates greater favorability of the US. His investigation reveals the following

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\(^1\) “Characteristics of anti-Americanism” refers to those traits or patterns that are noticeable in an analysis of public opinion polls.
averages: 50 points for Germany, 48 points for Italy, 43 points for Great Britain, and 20 points for France (Isernia 2007). On one end of the spectrum, Germany registers the highest overall favorability rating of the US (and the lowest prevalence of anti-Americanism) from 1954 to 2004. On the other end of the spectrum, France demonstrates lower favorability rating over time, which confirms the greater prevalence of anti-American sentiment in France.

While anti-Americanism varies across countries, its second characteristic is how it also fluctuates over time. For majority of the 20th century, the US was highly regarded by Europeans; however, at times, the US dropped in popularity and these dips are not arbitrary. Instead, a decrease in the US favorability ratings can usually be correlated with an unpopular US foreign policy or a transatlantic crisis. For example, drops in public opinions were registered during the Suez crisis in the late 1950s, the unpopular Vietnam War in the late 1960s, and Reagan’s missile policy in the early 1980s. Even though these three examples demonstrate decreasing favorability ratings, each example demonstrates increasing positive attitudes once the crisis is resolved.
Figure 1 illustrates all three characteristics of anti-Americanism—variability across countries, fluctuations over time, and a positive average. Since the end of WWII, Europeans have held positive opinions about the US and Americans. This figure shows these positive averages for France, Germany, and Great Britain. However, since the turn of the 21st century, all three countries demonstrate negative net opinions. In order to understand this historic change, several worldwide polls have been conducted and their results paint a bleak picture. Global public opinion has grown increasingly negative about the US and Americans.

In order to understand the source of this rising anti-American sentiment, these polls have tested various indicators. The first indicator of rising anti-Americanism
comes from an analysis of the US favorability rating. One survey asks whether or not the participant has favorable opinions of the US. The results\textsuperscript{2} for 1999/2000 indicated positive responses: Great Britain with 83 percent, France with 62 percent, Germany with 78 percent, and Spain with 50 percent. However, these numbers drop steadily in the following years. As seen in Figure 2, the majority of Western Europeans viewed the US unfavorably by 2006.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{favorable_opinions_us.png}
\caption{Favorable Opinions of the US}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{2} The data for the 1999/2000 survey results comes from the Office of Research at the US State Department, as indicated on the chart for the Pew Global Attitudes Project.
Along with declining favorability of the US, Europeans have also indicated a rising dislike for the American people—the second indicator for rising anti-Americanism. Figure 3 illustrates this decline in positive opinions from 2002 to 2006. However, these declines are not as dramatic as the declines in public opinion for the US. The majority still view Americans positively.

**FIGURE 3**

Favorable Opinion about Americans

Source: Pew Global Studies 2006

Even though declines in the positive opinions about the US and Americans have occurred recently, the significance of these drops cannot be understood unless
these averages are put into an historical context. Survey results\(^3\) reveal that respondents from Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy favored the US and Americans almost equally in 1958. In contrast, a similar poll from 2002 uncovers greater differences, with favorability of the US (65 percent) lower than favorability of Americans (73 percent) (Isneria 2007). Figure 4 illustrates not only greater disparities in favorability between the US and Americans, but also the increases in unfavorable attitudes in more recent opinions.

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\(^3\)This information had been obtained by analyzing two different surveys (USIA XX-11 for 1958 and Pew Global Attitudes survey for 2002). While the USIA survey offered “Fair” as an answer, the Pew Global Attitudes survey did not. Also, the “don’t know” response has been left out.
Investigating the recent declines in favorable opinion, Pew Global Studies asked respondents to identify the source of America’s problem. The results indicate that vast majorities in Great Britain, France, Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands believe the cause is President Bush, while very few find America (in general) to be the issue. In fact, a low regard for President Bush is heavily correlated with an unfavorable rating for the US, more than is any other attitude or opinion tested in the Pew Global Attitudes Project surveys (Pew Global Studies 2005). The views about US leadership decline rapidly from 2002 to 2007. As Figure 5 illustrates, the majority of Europeans find the US playing a leading role in world affairs to be undesirable; and, even more undesired throughout this time period is President Bush.

From the end of WWII until the turn of the 21st century, a closer examination of public opinion surveys has revealed some interesting facts: first, each decrease in popular opinion towards America can be linked to a specific and controversial world event; second, public opinion has always rebounded after the incident was resolved; and, third, even when decreases have occurred, the majority opinion remained positive. However, since 2002, the average opinion becomes negative. This historic downturn is linked to the overwhelming unpopularity of President Bush. With these facts established, I move to the second part of the thesis, which explores the complexity of anti-American attitudes and their involvement in the transatlantic relationship.
FIGURE 5

European Views of US Leadership

Source: Transatlantic Trends 2007
CHAPTER 3
THE HISTORY OF ANTI-AMERICANISM AND THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP

As the analysis of public opinion surveys has revealed, European anti-Americanism is a complex attitude, which varies between countries and fluctuates over time. Even though this attitude has played a role in politics since the end of WWII, it has only been since the turn of the 21st century that it has captured the attention of mainstream European public opinion. To understand its historical context, I turn to an examination of anti-Americanism. My understanding of this sentiment has been shaped by Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane’s typologies and by Andrei S. Markovits’ historical narrative of anti-Americanism. Later in this thesis, I will argue that the activities of the Bush administration have caused a substantial number of European citizens to distrust the US, though it has not yet created bias against the US.

Defining Anti-Americanism

To understand what encompasses this mood or attitude, Markovits cites a clear definition offered by Paul Hollander⁴:

Anti-Americanism is a predisposition to hostility towards the United States and American society, a relentless critical impulse towards American social, economic, and political

institutions, traditions, and values; it entails an aversion to American culture in particular and its influence abroad, often also contempt for the American national character and dislike of American people, manners, behavior, dress, and so on; rejection of American foreign policy and a firm belief in the malignity of American influence and presence anywhere in the world. (2007: 17)

Those who process any aspect of the US in a negative way hold anti-American sentiments.

Since anti-Americanism is a complicated attitude, it is not surprising that negative assessments vary in intensity. This difficult distinction between simple opinions and deep biases can be understood by analyzing the levels of distrust (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). Beginning at the lowest level, opinions are expressed when a group holds negative attitudes about an American value or US policy. However, this reaction is contained to a specific situation.

The next level of intensity is distrust. If a group continues to experience negative opinions about US policies and American values over an extended period of time, this group develops distrust. At this stage, governments are likely to demand more evidence or compensation before they are willing to support US policies (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). The negative reactions are no longer completely associated with a specific instance.

Finally, prolonged distrust plants the seeds of biases. An unbiased group could attribute bad policies to a specific situation, but a biased group processes the information differently and is more likely to attribute bad policies to essential features of the US (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). Since these groups have the tendency to discount possible favorable information, it makes negative information more salient. Biased negative attitudes could potentially become entrenched in societies, which would have detrimental consequences for US policymakers.
Since the prominence and salience of anti-Americanism have been known to wax and wane over time, it is not surprising that this complex attitude has two distinguishable historical types: elitist anti-Americanism and legacy anti-Americanism. Elitist anti-Americanism boasts a long history of scorning the US. Elites throughout Europe have looked down on Americans for their lack of culture, and their ignorance of and isolation from world affairs. These feelings have remained relatively stable over time (Markovits 2007). However, even though this type of anti-Americanism has held its place in European public opinion since the creation of America, it has never been detrimental to the success of US foreign policy.

As for the second historical type, legacy anti-Americanism stems from resentment of past wrongs committed by the US towards the respondent’s nation. Examples can be found in Spain and Greece, where both experienced American intervention on the side of the Right in their civil wars (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). On one hand, this form is unlike elitist anti-Americanism because it diminishes over time; however, on the other, it is similar because it also has little effect on the successful implementation of US policy.

While these two forms of anti-Americanism have historically been prominent in Europe, the new surges of anti-American sentiment have not fit into these categories. This has led Katzenstein and Keohane to develop a more defined typology, which encompasses the new types of anti-Americanism. In their categorization, they evaluate how well a subject (either individual or group) relates to the US and its values. On the positive side, subjects identify themselves well with
American values; on the negative side, subjects identify themselves in opposition or even hostile to the US. This typology is broken down into four specific types: liberal anti-Americanism, social anti-Americanism, sovereign-nationalist anti-Americanism, and radical anti-Americanism (2007c).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typologies of Anti-Americanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degree of fear that the US will adversely affect one’s own society</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive:</strong> Subject associates herself with what she considers US practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Pro-American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Ambivalence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Negative feelings but not too intense; unlikely to lead to action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative:</strong> Subject opposes what she considers US practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Negative and more intense than 5, but less than 6 due to lack of fear <em>Latent radical anti-Americanism</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Very negative and intense; likely to lead to action, violent or nonviolent <em>Mobilized radical anti-Americanism</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c

The first type is the liberal anti-Americanism, which is prevalent in liberal societies of advanced industrialized nations (former British colonies). Even though liberals strongly identify themselves with America, they are also very critical of the US when its actions are not consistent with its professed values (Katzenstein and...
Keohane 2007c). This perceived hypocrisy has the potential to reduce the support of US policy. Liberal anti-Americanism would never generate an attack on the US.

Social anti-Americanism is the second type, which is prevalent in countries with social and Christian democratic welfare states (continental Europe and Scandinavia). Deriving from a values gap, those with social anti-Americanism find the US to be less desirable and flawed because it does not have social protections or market restraints, allows the death penalty, and does not respect international treaties (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). Despite the differences, these nations and the US share broad democratic values.

The third type is sovereign-nationalist anti-Americanism, which focuses on political power. This group has three variations: nationalism, sovereignty, and exercise of state power (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). Those who focus on nationalism attach great importance to collective national identities, often finding it to be one of the most important values. The second variation is sovereignty, which means that the nation wants to have control over its own state, and control over its international involvement. This type is less common in Europe since most European polities have not only achieved self-rule, but also ruled others. Finally, the third variation represents the desire of a nation to reinforce its position as a great power. These nations define themselves in opposition to dominant states—the US (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). From a more general perspective, sovereign-nationalist anti-Americanism resonates in countries with strong state traditions, and those that view US actions as detrimental to nationalism, sovereignty, or exercise of state power.
Radical anti-Americanism is the fourth type, which is characteristic of Marxist-Leninist states such as the Soviet Union, North Korea, and many Islamic states. Not only is this group unable to identify with any aspect of America, but also despises almost all aspects. According to this group, American economic and political power relations ensure that US actions will be hostile to the development and observance of good values, practices, and institutions elsewhere in the world (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). Even though not all radical anti-Americans advocate violence, all argue for the weakening, destruction, or transformation of the political and economic institutions of the US.

Even though this typology helps delineate the various categories of anti-Americanism, none of these groups are homogeneous within a given society. A mixture of attitudes about the US can be present within any country. Furthermore, the different types are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, several of them bleed into one another. Katzenstein and Keohane note that some of the most interesting situations come from those that have more than one form of anti-Americanism at work (2007c).

The complexity of the various categories illustrates how multidimensional anti-Americanism truly is. Some argue this multidimensionality stems from America’s diversity. The US represents a variety of ideals, which can be contradictory at times. Examples of these tensions include: intensely secular and intensely religious, unilateralist and multilateralist, statist and antistatist (Keohane and Katzenstein 2007a). The American system can be acclaimed and assailed for various reasons
and has the ability to be loved and hated at the same time—making anti-Americanism difficult to define, understand, and counter.

In order to combat this attitude, the complex layers and variations of anti-American sentiment must be peeled away. At its core, the negative opinions can be attributed to two key aspects—reactions to what America does and reactions to what America is. In regards to the first and more ephemeral aspect, US foreign policy represents the actions of the government. On the other and more fundamental aspect, the characteristics and values extolled by Americans represent the American way of life. In both cases, negative views can create anti-American sentiment and have been the target in recent debates.

The rising anti-Americanism has not only caught the attention of public opinion polls, but also sparked debates between the elites of the American Left and the American Right. From the Left’s perspective, the recent rise reflects reactions to unpopular foreign polices. For example, negative opinions were at their highest levels right before the Iraq War. From the American Right’s perspective, the rising anti-Americanism can be attributed to the world hating what is good about the US—its values of freedom and democracy (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). In their opinion, if the US firmly pursues sound policies, favorable opinion will follow.

According to the Right, the negative attitudes are directed at what America is rather than foreign policy. Therefore, no changes could be (or should be) made to reduce negative attitudes. However, the American Left views the rise in negative sentiment very differently. They believe resentment is the result of what America
does rather than American society overall (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c).

Therefore, once the US foreign policy changes, the negatives attitudes will diminish.

Yet policy has not changed and the negative feelings appear to be growing stronger. From the American Left’s perspective, these new expressions of anti-Americanism reveal a deeper negative attitude—distrust. The world dislikes the Bush administration’s foreign policy objectives and distrusts its leadership in world affairs. From the American Right’s perspective, the growing dislike is simply out of jealousy and hatred of American values.

While some would agree with the Right’s view on this attitude, Katzenstein and Keohane point out that this view overestimates the resentment of American power and the hatred of American values and overlooks the “political salience of the distrust that American actions can create” (2007c: 10). Furthermore, if the Right’s view had been correct about the hatred of American values, the rise in anti-Americanism should have erupted after the Soviet Union collapsed. Instead, the US remained broadly popular until 2002.

As for the Left, the fact is that anti-Americanism, as measured by polls, reflects opinion (not distrust) and is closely tied to US policy (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). So if rising anti-Americanism is only simple opinion, why should it be studied and analyzed? It should be examined and the history of anti-Americanism should be investigated to see if these negative opinions are different from past periods of negative opinions.

Regardless of whether or not the rising anti-Americanism is linked to policy or innate dislike of the American culture, the growing negativity creates a very real
threat to the success of US foreign policy. This growing threat is what has triggered the study and analysis of this complex attitude. As this section has illustrated, anti-Americanism is a multidimensional value, which holds different meanings for every group, varies across countries, and fluctuates over time. In order to understand whether or not the rising anti-American sentiment in the 21st century is new and different from past attitudes, I turn the analysis to the historical context of anti-Americanism. The next section examines the transatlantic relationship since the end of WWII and the role anti-American sentiment played during those years.

**Understanding the Relationship between the US and Europe since 1945**

In this section, the relationship between the US and Europe is closely examined. The Cold War forced the US to not only maintain its significant presence, but also intensified its military capabilities, its political clout, and its cultural influence throughout Western Europe. During this period, the US and Europe developed a close partnership, which was widely popular on both sides of the Atlantic. Even once the common enemy fell in 1989, the transatlantic relationship remained strong. It was not until the recent events of 9/11 and the unilateral American war on terrorism that the public opinion about the US turned negative. While some scholars and policymakers were alarmed by this change, others argued that the negative feelings represented a normal trend in public opinion—three specific incidents can be cited during the Cold War alone. These downturns were always followed by significant rebounds. However, I argue that the deeply negative attitudes in post-9/11 public opinion are different than previous periods.
The Transatlantic Relationship from WWII until 1989

As WWII ended, the Iron Curtain swiftly fell and divided Europe. However, the Cold War offered a brutal stability to an exhausted continent and ensured that the revival of political life would take place on terms permitted by the international balance of power (Mazower 1998). Both the British and the Americans reluctantly and privately accepted the reality of their partnership with the Russians. Just as their respective militaries held Western Europe at the liberation, the Soviet army dominated Eastern Europe. The Cold War quickly closed in on the former allies pushing each to utilize their new spheres of influence.

Since Britain was just as economically and structurally destitute as the rest of the continent, the American allies stepped in with massive funds and manpower to help restore Western Europe. Unlike the First World War, monies were available regardless of allegiance during the war. The vast economic support of the Marshall Plan was widely popular and was considered the most important policy decision in the postwar period. A survey taken in January 1948 revealed solid majorities favoring the plan: 65 percent of Italians, 60 percent of French, and 60 percent of British (Isernia 2007: 82). These actions of massive funding and dedicated manpower greatly shaped the positive image of America for Europeans in the postwar period.

Even though the Marshall Plan offered incredible benefits and played a vital role in the rebuilding process, the belief that the European recovery hinged solely on US investment was a myth (Mazower 1998). From a purely quantitative perspective,
it became clear that the Marshall Plan was less important economically than its proponents made out (Mazower 1998). In fact, a majority of European investment was domestically generated, while growth rates in the West were no higher than in Eastern Europe where the countries not only lacked Marshall Plan aid, but also financed their superpower instead of being supported by it.

Furthermore, European governments were not simply the passive recipients of American generosity. They also effectively prevented a return to US isolationism by keeping the Americans in Europe with “their scare stories of the menace of communism. If the Americans were imperialists, they were there ‘by invitation’” (Mazower 1998: 296). Europeans welcomed the US military presence, which supplied the manpower for the rebuilding process and the security against the communist threat. American intelligence was stationed across Europe to not only counter communist beliefs, but also fuel anti-communist sentiments.

The political landscape throughout Europe leaned to the Right with the Communist party outlawed in Germany and Greece, and tolerated but harassed elsewhere. Across Western Europe, the police and security services worked together with the US CIA’s Office of Policy Coordination to counter communism. “European governments helped the youthful CIA try out its latest theories of psychological warfare against the Left, attacking communism through advertising, cultural publishing, traveling exhibitions, and film” (Mazower 1998: 289).

While the US intelligence focused on swaying European opinion away from communism, American business focused on swaying European opinion towards consumerism. From the early 1950s and onwards, US businesses changed their
tactics when marketing to Europe—they marketed the American Dream. Europeans were pumped with ideas about the need for new household goods to modernize the home. By changing their tactics, American advertising succeeded in creating the desire to purchase goods (Mazower 1998). While the advertisers created desire, the economic boom generated a disposable income to make such purchases possible. The astounding economic growth produced a climate in which Europeans were able to embrace the new consumerism—often called ‘Americanization’.

Even with all of these changes in the postwar period, the majority of Europeans welcomed the American presence and extolled many of its values. Yet Europeans could never fully “Americanize”, because they placed a much higher value on protecting its citizens from the market. Europe emphasized protective welfare states, while the US promoted unrestrictive “cowboy” capitalism.

The Cold War had created an environment where a strong transatlantic partnership was vital for the national securities of all nation-states, opening the door for constant US presence and involvement. This was paired with the new materialistic lifestyle provided by the economic boom and US cultural influences. However, there were times when the US dropped in popular opinion. These dips highlighted crises in transatlantic relationship. During the postwar and Cold War periods, three key incidents registered drops in positive opinion about the US: the Suez crisis; the Vietnam War; and, the placement of ballistic missile sites in Europe.

The first incident, the Suez crisis, is considered one of the most important crises in transatlantic history (second only to the Iraq War in 2003). It occurred in late 1956, when France and Great Britain invaded Egypt to seize control of the Suez
Canal. The US intervened to prevent a clash with the Soviet Union and issued an ultimatum to France and Great Britain—withdrawal from Suez or lose all US support (Isernia 2007). The French and British withdrew their forces. This crisis demonstrated the vast power the US had come to hold in world affairs; Europeans could no longer ambitiously pursue their international objectives without asking for American approval. This loss of power sparked the rising negative attitudes across Europe. However, the 1960s were a period of declining anti-Americanism, demonstrating how positive opinions returned after the situation had been resolved.

The second noticeable increase in anti-American sentiment came during the second half of the 1960s in response to the US war in Vietnam. The US wanted to prevent communist expansion in the region, so the Americans offered their military support to South Vietnam. For years the US poured its resources into the fight, but the American presence seemed to have little effect. Throughout Europe, the failed US actions shattered the American dream and eventually produced intense protests (Mazower 1998). These demonstrations developed into a powerful antiwar movement that fueled anti-American sentiments in Europe, which persisted until the US pulled out of Vietnam (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). At the War’s conclusion, the positive opinions of America returned to Western Europe.

The third incident occurred in the early 1980s. NATO had decided to station Pershing and cruise missiles, primarily in Germany, but also in other Western European countries, while it negotiated an arms reduction with the Soviet Union (Markovits 2007). The “dual track” decision provoked mass protests throughout Europe. In fact, unfavorable views of the US in 1982 were between 29 and 37
percent in Great Britain, France, West Germany, and Italy (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007c). Even more striking, a Newsweek poll from 1984 revealed that a plurality of respondents thought the US policies had done more to increase the risk of war than to promote peace. Anti-Americanism rose during this situation; however, as in previous cases, the positive opinion returned once the threat had been averted.

These three incidents illustrate the complexity of the transatlantic relationship during the Cold War. Although the US and Europe formed a cohesive alliance, this link was not without difficulties and strains. The important aspect of each of these examples was how the popular opinion rebounded following a resolution. This demonstrated how negative attitudes were reactions to US foreign policies, not a response to key characteristics of American culture or values. In fact, the Europeans adopted and even further developed typical “American” traits such as consumerism during the Cold War.

The American presence had a strong political impact in Western Europe. It helped rebuild the war-torn infrastructure of Western Europe and offered protection against the communist threat. However, American money and security could not be gained without strings attached. The recipients were forced into an inter-state dialogue—changing the international economic environment of Western Europe. Trade thrived and Europe began its “peaceful” integration (Mazower 1998). Europe emerged from the postwar period as a strong economic powerhouse on the international stage and an essential political partner on the united Western front.

Throughout the 20th century, the world order had become a power struggle between the West and the East. The American superpower, allied with its Western
European partners, fought the Cold War against the Soviet superpower and its Soviet bloc. Then, in 1989, the world order suddenly changed: the Berlin Wall fell, the Soviet Union collapsed, the Iron Curtain lifted, and the US emerged as the only world superpower.

The Transatlantic Relationship from 1989 until 2000

The collapse of the Soviet bloc in the early 1990s brought a close to the political era in which the US needed to be tightly linked to Europe for defense; the common enemy no longer held the cohesive alliance together. The US and Western Europe adjusted to the changing distribution of world power in order to maintain influence and pursue their interests (Featherstone and Ginsberg 1996). In fact, the US wanted the EU to emerge from America’s shadow and begin exerting its influence in international affairs—especially in Eastern Europe.

Instead of taking control of the post-Cold War effort in this region, the US deferred its objectives for Western aid to EU leadership (Featherstone and Ginsberg 1996). This not only offered Europe an opportunity to demonstrate its authority in Eastern Europe, but also demonstrated the US recognition of the EU as an important player on the world stage.

This new American attitude towards the EU reflected the realities of a post-Cold War international order (Featherstone and Ginsberg 1996). The US needed to enlist the support of other global powers to manage economic as well as other spheres of international relations. However, the US had hoped Europe would also
have the military strength to defend their territory and intervene within their new sphere of influence.

In the early 1990s, the EU tested its military strength when it was thrown into the civil war conflict in Yugoslavia (Featherstone and Ginsberg 1996). Although Europe quickly engaged in active mediation and in the dispatch of ceasefire monitors, no consensus could be reached to send military forces. The lack of a defense policy illustrated a huge obstacle in European international influence and marred the EU with an embarrassing failure to contain the Balkan crisis.

Just at a time when the EU’s international influence appeared to be rising, US leadership in the Yugoslav conflict highlighted the military strength of the US and the disunity of the EU states on a matter of vital interest to their national security (Featherstone and Ginsberg 1996). Despite the imbalance between the US and European military capabilities and global political leadership, the US recognized that the EU was an important and indispensable international partner—though underutilized and underdeveloped (Featherstone and Ginsberg 1996).

Americans continued to improve relations with the EU throughout the 1990s. In fact, the Clinton administration openly articulated its own EU policy, which sought to engage it as a foreign policy partner (Featherstone and Ginsberg 1996). Even without the unifying elements of a common enemy, the US and Europe worked to maintain its cohesive partnership.

Despite strong efforts to maintain the close transatlantic relationship, the US and Europe did begin to drift apart on various issues. On one side, the US turned its focus to emerging powers and potential threats in Asia. On the other side, the
Europeans directed their attention to an introspective evaluation of their own systems. During the 1990s, the EU took steps to consolidate and many European countries faced welfare state retrenchment.

The drift\textsuperscript{5} in the post-Cold War period was not a direct reaction to a particular policy or incident. Instead, the deteriorating transatlantic relationship was “manifested less in open confrontation than in quiet mutual alienation” (Calleo 2001: 361). Each side had shifted its focus to more pressing issues. As for anti-American sentiment during this post-Cold War period, the popular opinions of Europeans remained overwhelmingly positive.

\textit{The Threat of Terrorism and Changing Anti-Americanism in Transatlantic Relationship}

The slight drift in the transatlantic relationship throughout the 1990s was harmless, and many attributed this shift to the loss of a common enemy. Without this common bond, the US and the EU were free to focus on other issues. However, in the days following 9/11, America and Europe reunited. Europeans rallied behind its closest ally and NATO invoked \textit{Article Five} for the first time in its history. Even the historically anti-American French printed an article declaring, “We are all Americans” (Kroes 2006). A new common enemy pulled the transatlantic relationship back together—even if it only for a short period of time.

\textsuperscript{5} Some scholars believe the drift in the transatlantic relationship began in the 1990s. However, this disputed belief is not reflected in public opinion. It is based on diverging objectives in foreign and economic policies. For example, welfare state retrenchment is cited as an example of European divergence from US policy, yet welfare states have been a fundamental part of all European countries since the end of WWII. This leads to me to conclude, for the purpose of this thesis, that the drift is slight and not detrimental to the policy objectives of either side.
Although Europe provided political and military support for the Afghan invasion, the EU began to rethink its involvement when the Bush administration grew increasingly aggressive and unilateral. The initial feelings of goodwill were replaced with skepticism and even fear. Instead of providing a unifying factor, the US-led war on terrorism drove a wedge into the transatlantic relationship (Peterson and Pollack 2003). Even more damaging was how European countries split over whether or not they should maintain their alliance to the US. Some countries, such as Britain, followed the US into war, while others, such as France and Germany, quickly retreated from the transatlantic alliance. European attitudes, as expressed in public opinion polls, dropped to historically low levels as a result of US policy.

In order to understand how this recent drop in public opinion is different from other periods, I turn to Pierangelo Isernia’s analysis of net public opinions from the early years of the Cold War to the current situation with the war on terrorism. As Figure 6 illustrates, the range in variation of negative attitudes becomes wider and grows less stable over time. In fact, net favorable opinion in Great Britain, France, West Germany, and Italy reaches the lowest levels ever in 2002.

This figure also reveals the cyclical nature of this mood around a positive mean. Even when anti-Americanism increases, Isernia stresses that each dip in public opinion is followed by a reversal of the trend line back towards the positive mean (Isernia 2007). The declines are always followed by upswings in positive opinion once the incident or crises has been resolved. However, the current drop is much greater and has lasted much longer than any previous decline.

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6 In order to have a clearer picture of these fluctuations, Isernia smooths the trend lines for the four countries (Great Britain, France, West Germany, and Italy), then plots and evaluates the general movement of anti-Americanism over time. The results confirm this trend of growing fluctuations.
Furthermore, even though Isernia makes a compelling argument about the cyclical nature of anti-Americanism, his analysis does not explain what causes public opinion to return back to the positive mean. This analysis operates on the assumption that the majority of Europeans hold positive attitudes about the US, and falter only when a US policy upsets them. With this assumption in mind, returning back to the positive mean has been possible throughout the Cold War and post-Cold War period because the overall opinion of the US remained positive.

However, since the popularity of and the trust in Americans have recently disappeared, the trend line’s return to a positive mean seems less likely to occur without an active US effort. If the US does not pursue strategies to improve its
image, will popular opinion actually return to and remain at a positive level? These
questions are addressed in the next section, which focuses on the causes of anti-
Americanism since the beginning of the 21st century.
CHAPTER 4
CAUSES OF RISING ANTI-AMERICANISM

The national image of a particular country is influenced by a variety of factors—its culture and soft power, its formal foreign policy, and its public diplomacy efforts. Cultural appeal and the ability to co-opt audiences through soft power act as more subtle methods to influence opinion. As already noted, the global appeal of American popular culture infiltrates and impacts populations worldwide. However, since this power remains outside the government’s control, it will not be considered for the purpose of this thesis. Instead, the focus will remain on the governmental influencers—foreign policy and public diplomacy. Foreign policy exerts the strongest influence because the government states an opinion or takes an action, which directly affects a population. However, without the aid of public diplomacy, which reaches out to a population to educate it, not only about its foreign policy, but also about its culture, it can be assumed that foreign policy could be viewed in a more negative light. In this section, I evaluate the Bush administration’s foreign policy; then, I analyze his use of public diplomacy. I argue that President Bush’s actions (or inactions) have created an atmosphere that breeds a new and deeper form of anti-Americanism in Europe.
The Bush Administration’s Foreign Policy

The Bush administration’s neo-conservative influence shifted not only the values emanating from the White House, but also the approach this administration would take when dealing with foreign governments. European leaders were skeptical from the day Bush won the highly contested election victory in 2000, and it did not take long for his administration to confirm their suspicions. Although many of his policies were unpopular, I have chosen to focus on three specific cases where the events can be linked to negative changes in public opinion: (1) the Bush administration’s stance on climate change; (2) its disregard for international organizations; and, (3) its violations of human rights. These three cases will illustrate the general trend in European public opinion after 2000—resentment towards and dislike of America grows stronger and deeper amongst the general European population.

Case Study #1: Environmental Issues—the US Rejects the Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol, which became effective February 16, 2005, is the first attempt to control climate change. While the EU has committed to reducing emissions by 8 percent below 1990 levels, the US has refused to sign the agreement (Hanley 2005). Even though the US and Europe have not always agreed on environmental issues, the outright rejection of not only the Protocol, but also climate change itself outraged Europe, putting the first rift in the transatlantic relationship under the Bush administration.
This outright rejection caused an “overwhelmingly hostile” reaction by the Europeans (Stephens 2001). From the UK, the deputy prime minister stated the dismissal of Kyoto would put “his country’s special relationship with the US into a ‘deep freeze’” (Stephens 2001). The French Prime Minister denounced the American administration for its unilateral actions, and declared that the future of the EU must be a “contradistinction to the US” (Stephens 2001). As for Germany, the Protocol had been at the top of the agenda for Chancellor Schröder’s visit to Washington the following week. President Bush’s pronouncement that Kyoto was “dead” seemed to be a slap in the face for European interests since Schröder had written the administration just a week before stating this agreement was a key issue in US-EU relations (Oakley 2001). The Swedish environment minister told the BBC that the only fatal flaw in the Kyoto Protocol was the US position not to take part in it.

The negative reaction across Europe remained chiefly within government circles, although some public demonstrations did occur. These protestors accused Bush of “crimes against humanity and the planet” for rejecting Kyoto Protocol (Okonski 2001). For example, in France, Greenpeace demonstrators boarded an oil tanker to stop a shipment of oil to the US. These obvious tactics were accompanied with banners clearly stating their message: “Bush + Esso + Chevron + Conoco = Climate Killer” and “Stop Oil to Bush—Ratify Kyoto” (Okonski 2001). As these protestors clearly demonstrated, Greenpeace and various other NGOs wanted the Bush administration to respect international agreements.

As for the opinions of the mass population, the European Commission surveyed its citizens in 2004 and discovered that climate change was the number
one concern for the EU-15, much greater than the concern by average Americans (Eurobarometer 2005). As the Pew Global Attitudes Project revealed in 2006, a plurality of Americans were concerned “very little” or “not all” as compared to vast majorities of Europeans caring “a fair amount” and “a great deal” about the effects of global warming (See Figure 7).

Europe views environmental issues differently than the US. In a recent survey conducted by Transatlantic Trends in 2006, Europeans and Americans were asked about their threat perceptions of nine prominent international issues. For

FIGURE 7

Concerns about Global Warming

Source: Pew Global Studies 2006
eight of the nine issues, Americans perceived higher overall threat levels than Europeans. The one exception was the threat perception of global warming. As Figure 8 reveals, 90 percent of Europeans found this to be a significant threat. Even more striking was how this issue was among the highest perceived threats—second only to terrorism (Transatlantic Trends 2006). On the opposite side of the spectrum, the issue of global warming was one of the lowest perceived threats for Americans.

Clearly Europeans place a much higher value on environmental issues, while Americans disregard the threats of global warming. However, it is not because they
disregard the value of the environment. Instead, the lack of interest stems from the US administration downplaying the effects of environmental degradation and urging the Americans to ignore Europe’s hypersensitivity about this issue. With that being said, it is not surprising that very few Europeans trust the US to protect the global environment. This distrust comes from Bush’s blatant statement about placing the US economy above environment issues such as global warming, causing many Europeans to view this US position as another example of American greed.

While Europeans are placing a high importance on environmental issues, the Americans were moving in the opposite direction under the Bush administration’s leadership. As Edmund Andrews of The New York Times noted, Europeans are angry the US appears oblivious to widespread environmental concerns across most of Europe, and frustrated that the US, by virtue of its size, can undermine a treaty that was negotiated by more than 100 countries (Stephens 2001). This anger and frustration has led to very high disapproval ratings of US leadership on the issue of global warming.

**Case Study #2: Disregard of the UN—the US Invasion of Iraq**

The US-led invasion of Iraq occurred against the wishes of the UN Security Council in March 20, 2003. The Bush administration had purported that Saddam Hussein was harboring weapons of mass destruction (WMDs)—chemical, biological, and/or nuclear. The UN had been attempting to disarm Iraq through diplomatic efforts and UN weapons inspectors had toured the country on dozens of occasions, but no solid evidence of WMDs had been found in recent years.
Even so, the global community, and especially the US, remained wary of the possibility. While the other members of the UN Security Council wanted to continue inspections, the US was losing its patience. The US made it clear that it would not take part in any dialogue with Saddam Hussein. Instead, President Bush went to the UN General Assembly and urged the nations of the world to unite and bring an end to this danger. On November 8, 2003, the Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441—finding Iraq in breach of its obligations (CNN 2003). The UN vowed that serious consequences would result if Iraq did not fully and immediately disarm. However, the UN did not want use military force in the disarmament.

President Bush’s response: “The United Nations Security Council has not lived up to its responsibilities, so we will rise to ours” (CNN 2007).

The Bush administration did not feel the need to have international backing for this war. In fact, in his television and radio announcement on March 17, 2003, he stated: “This is not a question of authority, it is a question of will” (CNN 2003). According to the President, those who are willing and able had the right to act. Soon thereafter, the US invades Iraq with a small contingent of coalition partners, and the EU splits on its support.

The unilateral action of the Bush administration was not well received. From the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan reiterated how any military action in the region, which occurred without the blessing of the world body, would have its legitimacy questioned (CNN 2003). Following along this same line of thinking, the other members of the Security Council felt as though international law had been abandoned. Russian President Vladimir Putin said any possible war in Iraq would
be a mistake “fraught with the gravest consequences”, and would “destabilize the international situation in general” (CNN 2003). From France, the Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin, took an even more pacifist approach when he spoke on Europe 1 radio: “One country can win a war, but it takes more than one country to win a peace” (CNN 2003). From the French Foreign Minister to the UN Secretary General, world leaders spoke out against the US plan.

FIGURE 9

Use of Force in Iraq War

Source: Pew Global Studies 2006
Yet the elites were not the only opponents. Across Europe, massive demonstrations were organized. In fact, on February 15, 2003, millions of Europeans publicly united to oppose the war in Iraq—an unprecedented event (Markovits 2007). For some countries (including Germany, France, and Greece), these protests turned into rallies supporting the ruling government because they refused to join Bush’s “coalition of the willing” and fight in Iraq. Even in states where the government was supporting the invasion (including Great Britain, Netherlands, Spain, and Italy), demonstrators protested the impending war.

The US and its “coalition of the willing” defied the UN Security Council when it entered Iraq. As time passed and the US occupation of Iraq grew more bleak, countries that had stayed out of the war increasingly felt this had been the right decision. On the other side of the spectrum, those who had entered the war alongside the US increasingly felt as though their countries had made the wrong decisions. Figure 9 illustrates these changing attitudes.

Along with declining support for the war in general, global opinion holds that the removal of Saddam Hussein from power has not made the world a safer place (contrary to the Bush administration’s claims). In fact, European majorities find the world to be a more dangerous place because the region has become much more unstable.

President Bush considered Saddam Hussein’s regime to be an imminent threat to the US national security. This message was conveyed to the media by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Vice President Dick Cheney, and Secretary of State Colin Powell—all claiming to have sound intelligence confirming the
possession of WMDs. However, after months of fighting, it became apparent that Iraq did not have them. The US had misled the world into believing Iraq was a greater threat in order to invade it and overthrow Saddam Hussein. It placed its own foreign policy goals over the concerns of its allies and acted unilaterally.

Case Study #3: Human Rights Issues—Abuses at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and CIA Cells

The US-led war on terrorism relies almost entirely on intelligence collected from terror suspects detained at Guantnamo Bay prison in Cuba, Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, and secret CIA cells worldwide. In order to acquire time-sensitive information from these detainees, the administration has authorized harsh treatments of prisoners amounting to physical and psychological torture. These abuses have been captured on amateur film and photo by the soldiers that actually perpetrated the acts. After approximately two years of documented abuses at Abu Ghraib, the story is broken to the public by 60 Minutes and The New Yorker in the spring of 2004 (Kennedy 2006).

While the only hard evidence of torture comes from abuses at Abu Ghraib, reports have asserted that the techniques used in Iraq were actually perfected at Guantanamo. Even more striking is the suspicion that the US is not only holding terror suspects in CIA cells throughout the world, but also transporting these detainees to countries where torture is allowed and accepted. These human rights abuses have sent shockwaves throughout the world.

This shock can be attributed to the fact the US had actually been a global leader in human rights. The US signed the Geneva Conventions in 1949 (Kennedy
From the US perspective, the original purpose of signing the Conventions was to ensure that captured American combatants would be treated with respect and dignity. In fact, Americans championed these values and was a leader in promoting human rights. US military history revealed that POWs in American custody were consistently treated at levels higher than those set forth in the Geneva Conventions (Kennedy 2006). These high standards were maintained until recently.

The recent changes occurred after the attacks on September 11, 2001, ushering in a new era of international relations. Instead of nations entering and exiting combat with formal notices, this new enemy attacked without warning, targeted civilians, and had no clear link to a particular country. The al Qaeda terrorists lived and trained in terror cells throughout the world. For these reasons, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced that these detainees “would not be treated as prisoners-of-war, because they were not. They would be treated as unlawful combatants without the protection of the Geneva Conventions” (Kennedy 2006). This unprecedented denial of human rights protections was the Bush administration’s official statement.

Even though the US did not believe al Qaeda terror suspects had rights under the Conventions, these detainees were still protected under the UN Convention Against Torture. However, the vague and ambiguous language of the agreement was vulnerable to imaginative interpretation. In fact, the Justice Department had been asked by the administration to manipulate the definitions of the “severe” and “physical pain or suffering" in order to legally allow torture (Kennedy 2006). The results were astonishing.
Once the graphic evidence became public knowledge early in 2004, the Bush administration was quick to repudiate the conduct (Human Rights First 2005). Its official position was that these abuses were the work of a few. The Schlesinger Report stated that this sadism was not sanctioned; it was “animal house” on the night shift (Kennedy 2006).

However, this theory had several problems. First, for those with knowledge of interrogation techniques, the pictures at Abu Ghraib revealed the use of well-known methods (such as the famous picture of the prisoner standing on a box with wires attached to his fingers and with a hood covering his head). This particular method, “the Vietnam”, had been developed by the Brazilian military (Kennedy 2006). Therefore, questions arise as to how uneducated soldiers were able to conceive of this technique without someone instructing them to use it.

Europeans widely agree that the US government (not just the efforts of a “few bad apples”) had violated international law in its treatment of detainees (Kull 2006). The abuses have led many Europeans to change their views about the US government.

Once a world leader in human rights, the US has now lost nearly all its credibility. Nearly a decade ago, majorities in Great Britain and Germany would have stated that the US did a ‘good job’ in promoting human rights. Figure 10 illustrates how different the picture is today with the US considered a poor leader by 56 percent of British and 78 percent of Germans in the area of human rights (Kull 2006).
The combination of indefinite detention, abusive interrogations, and unfair military commissions makes it apparent why longstanding American allies have stopped supporting the US in its fight against terrorism. In fact, the outrageous abuses have simply added to the negative attitudes about the US to the point of making pro-American stances politically toxic (Nye 2004). Political leaders throughout Europe have needed to distance themselves from the US in order to succeed in domestic politics.
Results of Unpopular Foreign Policy

As the results from the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) revealed in Figure 11, approval ratings for the US actions are at all time lows. Europeans overwhelming disapprove of how the Bush administration has approached global warming, the Iraq War, and human rights abuses in Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, and CIA cells. I have chosen these three cases to specifically demonstrate not only how this administration has been disliked before 9/11, but also how its resolute stances have created more negative opinions.
Through these actions, the Bush administration has helped to carry negative feelings about what America does—its foreign policy—over into what America is.

Even before President Bush was elected, Europeans had been caricaturing him as the “quintessential ugly American: ignorant of world affairs, probably stupid, isolationist-minded, a notorious polluter and a puppet of corporate interests” (Stephens 2001). His swift rejection of the Kyoto Protocol simply confirmed their stereotype. Europeans were openly irritated with US, and a values gap in the transatlantic relationship became noticeable. While Europeans found environmental issues to be a growing threat to the international community, Americans denied the existence of the problem.

European frustration resulted in growing resolve across Europe to forge ahead and find a way to accomplish its goal of passing Kyoto without immediate US involvement. As vocalized by the French Prime Minister, the EU needed to become an influential actor on the world stage—apart from the US. The promotion of the Kyoto Protocol became the first opportunity to make this distinction.

Bush provided confirmation of the Europeans’ beliefs about the “greedy Americans”. It became obvious that American priorities were self-focused, when Bush openly asserted that he would place the US economy over any environmental policies. Even worse, the unilateral decision of the US nearly crippled an agreement that had been negotiated by over one hundred countries for years. The US

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7 For the purpose of this paper, the term “environmental issues” refers specifically to climate change. This distinction is necessary because the US and Europe have exhibited different priorities on a variety of environmental issues in the past, with the US leading in some areas. Therefore, it would be a gross oversimplification to state that Europe cares more about the environment when looking at environmental issues in a generic sense. However, by making the term “environmental issues” synonymous with “global warming” and “climate change”, the statement “Europe cares more about environmental issues” is true.
disregarded the will of the international community, which was what angered the Europeans the most.

However, this response across Europe was not new. Instead, as Edmund Andrew of *The New York Times* observed, the rejection of the Kyoto Protocol simply “aggravated a mixture of grudges that have gnawed at Europeans for years” (Stephens 2001). This particular policy contributed to previously established negative emotions about the US. The rising anti-American sentiment that began in 2000 had been triggered by this foreign policy.

Then, Bush bullied much of world into joining the “coalition of the willing”. In this fight, the Bush administration believed the world fits neatly into two categories: those who fight terrorism alongside the US or those who are against the US and harbor terrorists. Even though Europe had always been a strong ally of the US, EU split on the issue of invading Iraq. The governments of Great Britain, Spain, Netherlands, and Italy pledged military support, but France and Germany refused to join. This dissidence ignited tensions on both sides of the Atlantic.

For most Americans, the invasion of Iraq was viewed as necessary in the fight against terrorism—even if no connections had been made between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein. However, for most Europeans, the unilateral US invasion was seen as a choice—an assertion of American power in an illegitimate way (Howard 2003).

The Germans and especially the French were enraged by the insular views the US held in the fight against terrorism. Obviously, these Europeans did not promote or support terrorist activities; they simply disagreed with the Bush
administration. Furthermore, major argument for the American invasion was that Iraq had refused to follow UN Security Council resolutions. Yet the American invasion, overthrow, and occupation, also disregarded the opinion of the UN.

The Germans, French, and other Europeans who remained outside the war effort found themselves in opposition to an aggressive, powerful, and narrow-minded military force that could and would pursue its ambitious plans without adhering to international rulings. In the face of such an irrational force, what influenced their decision to remain outside the coalition?

Even though some would claim anti-Americanism affected their decision, Katzenstein and Keohane revealed that there was only a slight relationship between public attitudes toward the US in 2002 and the subsequent coalition membership—average median favorability score at 72 points for members and 63 points for nonmembers (2007b).

While anti-American attitudes did not significantly affect coalition membership, the Iraq War devastated positive opinions across Europe. As previously noted, the mean for public opinion becomes negative for the first time\(^8\). President Bush’s cowboy diplomacy and use of unilateral military force enraged Europeans.

Although the US had lost some credibility when the world discovered that Iraq had not been holding WMDs, the remainder of its credibility was taken once the events at Abu Ghraib became known. Not only had the US defied the UN to enter this war, but also decided to ignore Geneva Conventions. The world community could no longer view the US as a champion of freedom and democracy.

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\(^8\) The negative average was revealed in Figure 1 of this thesis. Even though popular opinion had declines over time, it did not become negative until 2002. This is not be confused with the dips in net attitudes as revealed by Isernia in Figure 6.
Negative feelings permeated the European assessment of the US at this time. Therefore, when the news about human rights abuses at Abu Ghraib surfaced, Europeans were not shocked, just appalled by the blatant disregard for human life. Even though a direct connection to the administration’s orders had not been made, most of Europe blamed these abuses on Bush.

All of the negative attitudes and opinions had the potential to turn from dislike into biases against the US. If that were to occur, Europeans would first associate the US with unilateral actions, disregard for international law, and now, appalling human rights abuses, before any other positive connection could be made. While no evidence indicated that European negative opinion had turned into systematic biases, the situation at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and CIA cells throughout the world only added to the levels of distrust.

Since his inauguration, the Bush administration has raised eyebrows across Europe. With each passing policy, the skepticism turns into annoyance, which grows into anger. The negative opinions about Americans rise to unprecedented levels. Yet even though anti-American sentiment reaches an all-time high, most scholars assert that these attitudes will not leave a lasting impression in Europe over time. As noted by Isernia, negative trends downward have always been followed by equally positive upward turns. It is simply too early to confirm this full cycle. However, since the distrust has deepened and strengthened for nearly a decade across Europe, the departure of Bush will not have a huge impact on public opinion. In order for the upward turn to be completed, the US will need to do more than elect a new leader and make popular foreign policy. It will also need to regain its soft
power. This next section focused on American efforts to promote a positive image of the US through public diplomacy efforts—boosting public opinion worldwide.

**Public Diplomacy Efforts**

Public diplomacy seeks to understand, inform, engage, and influence all types of foreign societies, whether friendly, hostile, or wavering, through a variety of information, culture, education, and advocacy programs. It reaches these audiences through radio, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, television, and now Internet blogs, sms messaging, and chatrooms. It should not be propaganda or attempt to coerce; it should be objective and deal with facts and figures. Public diplomacy offers the necessary tools—information and personal experiences—to allow a foreign population to form its own opinion about a country, its government, and its people.

The United States had been using public diplomacy efforts since before WWII; however, these efforts became a fundamental tool during the Cold War. In this period, US public diplomacy focused on three main objectives: conveying objective facts on issues; promoting the US government’s position on those issues; and, facilitating positive experiences with US. These objectives were achieved through the independently-operated United States Information Agency (USIA). To many officials, public diplomacy efforts were considered to be just as valuable as military strategy in the fight against communism.

Once the Cold War ended, preserving the extensive public diplomacy apparatus seemed unnecessary. In 1999, the USIA was dismantled, and the
independent nature of US public diplomacy ceased to exist. Many public diplomats foresaw public diplomacy efforts taking the back burner its new home—the Department of State.

The major source of this fear was driven by large contrasts in the structure and purpose of public diplomacy and foreign policy. On one hand, public diplomacy efforts are driven by the needs of the overseas posts and focus on exchange programs in order to promote mutual understanding between two cultures. On the other hand, foreign policy is driven by the needs of the Secretary of State and focuses on the promotion of the policy in the traditional, over-centralized, and hierarchical institutional structure (Kramer 2000). While every public diplomacy effort functions as a bottom-up approach by customizing its message to a specific region and culture in its language, foreign policy promotion functions in a more top-down approach spreading a cohesive message about the US government throughout the world to all world and community leaders.

In order for public diplomacy to maintain the same effectiveness it had while under the independent USIA agency, the public diplomacy officers and the State Department’s foreign and civil service officers will have to learn how to function together. Yet even if these adaptations prove successful, the major difference in leadership remains problematic. Both the foreign policy and public diplomacy efforts would be under the control of a politically-appointed partisan leader. While having a Secretary of State promote the foreign policy of the elected administration continues to be vital to the cohesive and unified promotion of foreign policies, having this same leader control the public diplomacy efforts taints the efforts with partisan attitudes.
An independently directed public diplomacy agency remains outside criticisms of the particular administration—allowing it to continue to produce unbiased materials, offer broadcasts, and operate exchanges while maintaining its credibility.9

FIGURE 12

US Government Expenditures on Public Diplomacy
FY 1980-2007


9 The discussion of unbiased materials specifically refers to the ability of an independent agency, such as the former USIA, to more easily stay out of party politics. Obviously, materials produced by such an agency would carry biases for the US government, culture, and/or American way of life. However, remaining outside the direct influence of partisan politics allows the public diplomacy efforts to simply focus on promoting greater American attributes and values. Meanwhile, the State Department and the Secretary of State closely follow the elected administration’s political, and often partisan, views when promoting foreign policies. For example, regardless of an administration’s specific policy towards the former Soviet Union, the public diplomacy efforts between the US and the USSR promoted cultural understanding of each other’s ways of life and pushed for meaningful exchanges between scholars and researchers. Although foreign policy tactics changed with administrations, the overall objectives of public diplomacy throughout the Cold War remained the same.
In the post-Cold War period, public diplomacy not only lost its independence, but also took a huge funding cut. While this seemed reasonable during the peaceful post-Cold War era, it was surprisingly maintained after the attacks of September 11th. In fact, public diplomacy funding levels in FY2000, FY2001, and FY2002 dropped below FY1980 levels (Epstein 2006). The lack of attention to these efforts could be a confluent factor in the rising anti-American sentiment worldwide.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

Since the end of WWII, the prevalence and salience of anti-Americanism has waxed and waned across Europe. Historically, Europeans have not held this attitude, reserving it for only a small portion of the population—mostly elites. However, the turn of 21st century has brought a turn in public opinion. Europeans are finding the US and Americans unfavorable and untrustworthy. What could have caused this shift, and is this change different from previous changes public opinion?

As the results of Transatlantic Trends opinion polls indicate in Figure 13, President Bush is, by far, the greatest contributor to the growing anti-American sentiment in Europe. His unilateral foreign policies and disregard of international governing bodies have enraged not only European elites, but also the masses. This outrage reaches deep into public opinion, and has lasted much longer than previous periods of negative attitudes. The depth and longevity of current distrust creates a problem for the future effectiveness of US foreign policy. Even after President Bush leaves office and public opinion has an opportunity to rebound, Europeans will no longer embrace Americans as close allies. Instead, the transatlantic partnership will mature and each side will become more autonomous.
Evidence of this change comes from the Bush administration’s widely unpopular foreign policies. It has shown deliberate disregard for the environment by rejecting the Kyoto Protocol; it united an enraged Europe by overstepping the UN to invade Iraq; and, it shocked the world with its policies for inhumane treatment of detainees at US prisons. In the past, the US had worked along side Europe to promote environmental issues, strengthen international organizations, and champion human rights. However, the Bush administration has not only broken away from this strong working relationship, but has also become the greatest adversary for all three issues.
Further evidence comes from the Bush administration’s stance on public diplomacy. It compounded the problem of growing negative opinion by ignoring public diplomacy efforts. Instead of these efforts playing a fundamental role in the ambiguous war on terrorism, the administration focused on high levels of military spending and military might to combat the threat. Yet even the best marketing plans and public relations schemes cannot sell unpopular ideas. Given that the Bush administration’s foreign policies have proven to be widely detested, it must be assumed that even extensive and elaborate public diplomacy could not have turned the overwhelming disapproval into approval—but these efforts would not have hurt public opinion.

Finally, the current reaction contrasts previous responses. The current unpopular foreign policy issues, such as the Kyoto Protocol, the Iraq War, and the abuses at Abu Ghraib, have not only registered strong negative reactions, but also occurred consecutively. Coupled with low public diplomacy efforts, the public opinion has had little time and no help in rebounding. Previous downturns in US popularity were always followed by significant upswings; however, these incidents were typically isolated and active public diplomacy efforts helped turn the negative attitudes back into positive opinions.

Looking towards the future, Europe has already begun moving forward with new leaders making an effort to rebuild the transatlantic relationship. However, even though these heads of government are making great strides, the majority of Europeans continue to distrust American involvement in world affairs. This marks an
interesting shift in anti-American sentiment—the European elites view the US more positively than the European masses.

Even more significant, these levels of distrust will not diminish drastically once President Bush leaves office. Instead, the next administration will be forced to catch up with the Europeans in their effort to rebuild trust—a daunting challenge that will be difficult for Republicans and Democrats alike. The next administration will have to not only pursue sound foreign policy that considers the interests of its allies, but also revamp the American public diplomacy efforts to restore America’s soft power.

After a half a century of close consultations in the transatlantic relationship, the Bush administration pushed Europeans out of the partnership. Or perhaps, the Europeans turned their backs on the Americans. Regardless of how one chooses to view the situation, the US and Europe have drifted apart. Even though they share common interests and goals, fear common threats and enemies, and pursue democracy and free markets, Europe no longer relies on the US as it has in the past.
REFERENCES


