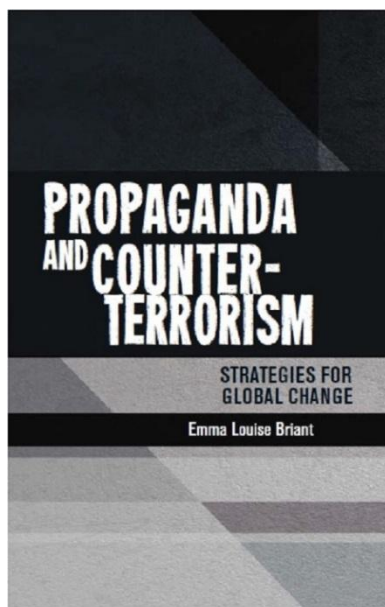


# Brief Summary Report on Recent US Information Operations and Public Diplomacy Efforts in Countering Terrorism for the Director of the US Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

By Emma L Briant

## *About the book:*



### *Propaganda and Counter-terrorism*

A unique account of how the British and United States Governments attempted to adapt their propaganda strategies for counter-terrorism in a post-9/11 global media environment.

### *Methodology:*

Unique empirical research drawing on documents as well as interviews and correspondence with 76 experts and planners including key foreign policy, defense and intelligence personnel.

The research primarily focuses on the period from September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 to 2009 but includes analysis of key developments up to 2013.

Order the book through *Oxford University Press*.

## **Key Findings:**

- Coordination cross-government of information activities was found to be lacking, this led to informal solutions which produced inconsistent outcomes and many practises which were counterproductive or ethically questionable. (See [Briant, 2015a](#))
- In some interviews US International relationships with allies including the UK were shown to be a way some military and intelligence personnel evaded US restrictions and laws concerning propaganda, a very concerning practise. (See [Briant, 2015a](#) & [Briant, 2015d](#))
- During 2005-2009 (a period of contestation when PSYOP and Public Affairs were coordinated in the Pentagon and new internet policies were produced) significant

policy changes were forced through and debate was suppressed. (See Briant, 2015a, Briant, 2015c)

- This meant until 2009, Public Affairs was marginalised for a significant period to the detriment of defense communications and significant concerns they raised about *how* coordination has been implemented were not adequately debated or resolved.
- Some evidence of racial bias among influential members of the DOD Information Operations community, including those responsible for training. Such attitudes reported to influence personnel lower down in preparation of products in theatre. (See Briant, 2015b)
- The 2012 Amendment to the Smith-Mundt Act may be of concern due to some indication that Public Diplomacy channels can be used for covert IO. (See Briant, 2015a)
- Increased coordination in itself will not provide the solution - Significant reappraisal of government information practices is required including independent viewpoints.
- Over-reliance on Think-tanks and government funded research is a significant factor and there must be greater engagement with, and understanding of the value of independent academic expertise which would in the long term produce more robust solutions. (See Briant, 2015a).
- A *fully independent* database, forum and academic advisory panel on US Government defense communication policy and planning would be an appropriate solution to facilitate this, and would help build trust.

### ***For further information, evidence and examples:***

Briant, Emma L (2015a) '**Propaganda and Counter-terrorism: Strategies for Global Change**', Manchester: Manchester University Press

Briant, Emma L (2015b) '**Paternalism within Elite Legitimacy Claims for Propaganda since 9/11**' Conference Paper submitted to the IAMCR Conference, UQAM, Montreal. (Pre-publication, full paper available on request)

Briant, Emma L (Submitted August - 2015c) "'Pentagon Ju-Jitsu': PSYOP and Public Affairs - the Propaganda War' for Special Issue of *Critical Sociology* on Organised Persuasion. (Pre-publication, full paper available on request)

Briant, Emma L (April 2015d) '**Allies and Audiences: Evolving strategies in Defense and Intelligence Propaganda**' in *International Journal of Press/Politics* (Special Issue), Vol. 20, No. 2. Pp145-165.