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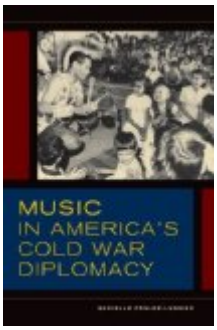
Danielle Fosler-Lussier. *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015. 352 pp. $65.00, hardcover, ISBN 978-0-520-28413-5.



Reviewed by Caitlin Schindler

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Commissioned by Seth Offenbach (Bronx Community College, The City University of New York)

Certain presumed features of the United States' public diplomacy during the Cold War are generally accepted by scholars in the field. Some of these include the predominance of one-direction exchanges between the United States and other nations; the use of such exchanges to achieve policy goals; and that foreign publics, targets of US public diplomacy, had little impact on Washington. However, Danielle Fosler-Lussier's *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy* challenges these long-held assumptions, providing a much more complex understanding of US public diplomacy. *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy* examines the nature of the US Department of State's Cultural Presentations program. Beginning in 1954, the Cultural Presentations program sent musicians from across the country to perform around the world. The program was managed by the State Department, but the department was advised by the American National Theatre and Academy (ANTA) as well as a ten-member Advisory Committee on the Arts (ACA), composed of artists, musicians, conductors, and composers. ANTA and other private organizations helped to fund the exchanges alongside the US government.

Fosler-Lussier begins by looking at how Washington intended the program to function. From the perspective of Congress and others, the program was meant to work as a one-way flow of influence to improve the United States' image abroad. The belief was that the United States could control the flow of culture, ideas, and the effects these had on the people of other nations. Yet, as many reports from cultural affairs officers and other embassy officials noted, the flow of information, culture, and ideas was infinitely more complex and messy. First, as Fosler-Lussier explains, the Cultural Presentations program required a great deal of logistical planning and preparation on the part of the embassy staff. This included and was not limited to finding a venue for performances, arranging accommodations, locating items such as pianos and other large instruments, and finding a local sponsor for performances. Second, in examining the work of the embassy staff to arrange visits, performances, jam sessions, and

master classes, Fosler-Lussier finds foreign audiences' often influenced which musicians were selected to perform, the genre of the music played, as well as performance programs, in effect making foreign audiences collaborators. By focusing on the perspectives of embassy staff and foreign perspectives towards the program and the performances themselves, Fosler-Lussier highlights the contradiction of US cultural diplomacy: the view from Washington versus the view from the embassy as well as from the eyes of the recipient audiences. To better understand the different points of view, Fosler-Lussier consulted archival materials, the print press, memoirs, and interviews. The observations made in the introduction regarding the flow of information and purpose of the Cultural Presentations program are invaluable to illustrating the different understandings of public diplomacy's purpose and role in foreign relations. She demonstrates that the program created multiple flows of culture and information between embassy staff and local sponsors, between musicians and their audience, between the audience and the embassy, and between nations who received US musicians and the US public.

The remainder of the book builds on the multidirectional flow of information by delving further into the music and politics of the program. The Cultural Presentations program spanned almost three decades of change and tension with respect to US music, culture, politics, and society. Each chapter focuses on a specific aspect of the program that exposes these tensions within the program. One prominent and recurring issue which the program experienced was defining US culture and what type of music should be used to best represent the United States; this was especially difficult because US music changed rapidly over the period. Along with the questions about what music should be used, the State Department had to take foreign audiences' preferences into consideration. Fosler-Lussier points out that the objectives of the program would have been undermined if audiences refused to attend or criticized a performance, so foreign public opinion was an important consideration.

As Fosler-Lussier explains in chapter 1, for the first years of the program, the ACA and State Department believed classical music was the best type of music to represent US cultural prestige. The decision was influenced by a number of factors, including the belief that popular music could be evaluated only based on its appeal, which was deemed too subjective, and Soviet claims that only mature nations should lead the world. The State Department believed that by presenting high culture it would demonstrate that the United States was a cultured nation with real achievements in the arts, education, and literature, and was thus capable of leading the world. The problem with classical music was that most of it had been composed by Europeans, and it was generally performed by European musicians or American musicians who had trained in Europe. Critics charged that the music was not truly American. Furthermore, classical music tended to target the elites in a nation, specifically national leaders.

However, as Fosler-Lussier explains, the prestige associated with classical music worked both ways. The foreign audiences who received US classical performances understood the music was elite and deemed the musicians worthy of performing the music, offering the United States a special sense of belonging to an elite music community. Analyzing the performances through an anthropological lens, Fosler-Lussier argues each performance is a type of "gift economy." This gift came with expectations and strings attached, and recipient nations were aware of this. Yet, even with these expectations, nations made demands about the value and quality of these gifts. For example, the Japanese demanded the best for each performance and had their own interpretation of which ensemble qualified as the best (i.e., the Cleveland and Chicago symphony orchestras were not as good as those from New York and Philadelphia). If the performers were not considered to be

world-class, the audience tended to be highly critical of the performance regardless of the quality. Classical music also remained preferable to jazz because of its elite connotations, which held sway even outside Europe. Classical music as music diplomacy was not without its critics, but as Fosler-Lussier illustrates, the decision to use classical music as part of music diplomacy was also influenced by foreign audiences.

Yet, by the early 1960s, foreign audiences increasingly demanded more entertaining or popular music. The State Department started to incorporate jazz into the program, arguing that it was a thoroughly American genre of "art music" with a unique history. Lectures on the history of jazz and jazz styles were coupled with performances. The lectures not only helped more audiences to understand and accept jazz, but also created opportunities for one-on-one engagement, which performances did not always afford. As jazz became more widely accepted, new tensions arose. First, the State Department designed jazz programs to target a wider audience, from non-jazz fans to enthusiasts. Jazz fans and even the musicians who toured on behalf of the program objected to playing older jazz styles Most jazz musicians wanted to push to new sounds and new musical concepts. The challenge the department often faced was pleasing a general audience which included both the initiated and non-initiated.

In addition to addressing questions of US music and cultural representations, Fosler-Lussier highlights domestic tensions that impacted the Cultural Presentations program, including the civil rights movement, arguments over who was an appropriate representative of the United States, and US involvement in Vietnam. By the time the State Department began to send jazz performers abroad, it had already sent African American classical musicians who had been asked questions about race and politics. These musicians responded as they felt. Fosler-Lussier counters the belief that the State Department inadvertently used African Americans as pseudo-ambassadors by observing how the department purposefully intended for musicians to interact with audiences and other musicians. US officials knew African Americans would be asked political questions. The same was true for folk musicians and rock-and-roll musicians who were outspoken against US policies in Vietnam and even performed music which protested US involvement in Vietnam. As Fosler-Lussier convincingly argues, only bad manners or criminal behavior could undermine the department's message of freedom of speech. By not censoring how musicians responded to questions about race or US politics, the department's message was more impactful and meaningful.

While this was good for US international relations, discussing domestic issues with the international public and who spoke on behalf of the United States was sometimes controversial among the US public. In many respects, as more popular genres of music were incorporated into the program, the type of music mirrored or spoke of the problems facing the United States domestically. The music of rock, blues, and folk became associated with political and social protest against government policies. Folk singers Bill Crofut and Steve Addiss sang protest songs on civil rights and against war. They worked conversations with the audience into their performances to discuss the songs' meanings. Most embassy personnel did not raise any objections to their songs; rather, they believed the performances provided some honesty to the work of music diplomacy. In the 1970s, the rock group Blood, Sweat and Tears went on tour as part of the Cultural Presentations program. The Canadian lead singer, David Clayton-Thomas, was outspokenly against US foreign policy and made insulting comments about the US government which were reported by the US press. This sparked public and congressional reaction against the band acting as a representative of the United States. The State Department defended the decision to use the band as part of US music diplomacy, arguing that its members were top rock

musicians and that they had something about US culture and ideas to communicate to the rest of the world.

As Fosler-Lussier explores how thornier domestic issues were connected to the Cultural Presentations program, she shows how music and musicians chosen to represent the United States helped to negotiate domestic problems rather than sidestep them. While the book devotes a whole chapter to the issue of civil rights and African American music diplomats, other domestic political debates are only discussed tangentially to concerns about using more popular forms of music. She does demonstrate how the US media and music diplomacy forced these issues to be debated by American citizens, drawing them into world affairs and causing some of them to question US policies and relations with the world. This particular point could use further exploration, as public diplomacy literature tends to focus on Washington and leave out voices of the US public, which certainly affected public diplomacy.

Another major tension explored in ***Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy*** is how foreign politics impacted and influenced cultural diplomacy. Just as US politics and social issues weighed on the Cultural Presentations program, international events also had an effect. Fosler-Lussier explains how the State Department had to approach foreign audiences carefully in the aftermath of the Hungarian Revolution and the signing of the Lacy-Zarubin treaty allowing cultural exchanges between the United States and Soviet Union, so as not upset relations with other countries. The Cultural Presentations program was also affected by the wave of anticolonial struggles around the world, which coincided with the civil rights movement taking place in the United States. Fosler-Lussier explains how African American musicians were often expected to show support for colonial independence and were sometimes disappointed by what they perceived as a lack of solidarity for freedom and equality.

The book explores other tensions as well, including the ongoing debate about the purpose of the program itself, tangled up with the question of whether culture can be used for political ends or if culture can only used for culture. This was heavily debated when the United States and Soviet Union began to regularly exchange musicians and dancers in 1958. One debate left unexplored is the one concerning the relationship between culture and information, although it does come up at various moments throughout the book. With different genres of music, the US Information Agency helped the State Department introduce the music well before a performance, providing pamphlets, sheet music, recordings, and broadcasts of jazz, blues, and rock-and-roll. The contentious debate about the relationship between information and culture was never sufficiently resolved. Though Fosler-Lussier does address the issue of the Cultural Presentations program as an element of US propaganda, which she effectively discounts, she does not delve into the attempts to distinguish and separate US information programs from the nation's cultural programs.

This book evaluates the effectiveness of the Cultural Presentations program, but arrives at a mixed conclusion. Ultimately the program did not have the intended impact or effect that Washington or even the State Department desired. However, the significant contribution of this book is in the complex way that Fosler-Lussier describes the effect of cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy —in terms of human relationships and cross-cultural exchange. In many ways this book undermines the belief that much of US Cold War diplomacy was unidirectional and totally politically driven. Most of those in Washington and the State Department intended it to be political, but as Fosler-Lussier illustrates in the many vignettes throughout this book, relationships are messy and never one-way, even when one actor is more powerful and has access to more resources than another actor. The United States could not compel people in Japan and Vietnam to attend US sym-

phonic or jazz concerts, much less to enjoy them. In order to engender a relationship, the United States was forced to pay attention to people's tastes and approach musical presentations with deference to each society's sensitivities, both historical and cultural, to ensure that people would simply attend concerts. People's ideas of good music needed to be taken into account to ensure that they left a concert pleased with the performance. The end result did not guarantee the achievement of some political end; at the most, the United States paid a nation the compliment of being worthy of a prestigious performance by top musicians, which, however seemingly insignificant, garnered a foreign public's respect, not obedience or political acquiescence to US foreign policies.