

Actions, Not Just Attitudes: A New Paradigm for U.S.-Arab Relations

by [David Pollock \(/experts/david-pollock\)](/experts/david-pollock)

Jun 17, 2010

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[David Pollock \(/experts/david-pollock\)](/experts/david-pollock)

David Pollock was the Bernstein Fellow at The Washington Institute from 2007 until his death in 2024, focusing on regional political dynamics and related issues.



In-Depth Reports

The latest Pew poll on Middle Eastern political behavior illustrates the media's post-9/11 tendency to report on America's standing on the Arab street -- without analyzing whether attitudes toward the U.S. have any significant effect on actual Arab behavior. To remedy this striking diagnostic gap, The Washington Institute presents a study that utilizes hard statistics, unprecedented in scope and depth, to tackle the relationship between Arab political and economic activity on the one hand, and attitudes toward the United States expressed through public opinion polling on the other.

In *Actions, Not Just Attitudes: A New Paradigm for U.S.-Arab Relations*, Dr. David Pollock, a renowned expert on public opinion polling in the Arab world, presents and interprets massive databases that account for actual Arab political behavior at both official and popular levels, from twenty Arab states, over an entire decade. Concise case studies of a dozen key Arab countries complement the wealth of quantitative evidence that makes this report a unique and invaluable reference tool.

The conclusions of *Actions, Not Just Attitudes* run contrary to conventional wisdom and yet are uniquely compelling because they derive exclusively -- and refreshingly -- from factual record. Indeed, this solidly documented new study answers the questions that the media, and even government, are not asking.

APPENDICES

Four appendices contain the raw data used for this study, as well as ancillary research material. These appendices are available for viewing or download.

- [Arab Behavioral Index Datafiles \(/uploads/Documents/pubs/PF104-Appendices/ArabBehavioral_files/ArabBehavioral.htm\)](/uploads/Documents/pubs/PF104-Appendices/ArabBehavioral_files/ArabBehavioral.htm) (html)
- [Arab Reform Index Datafiles \(/uploads/Documents/pubs/PF104-Appendices/ArabReformIndex_files/ArabReformIndex.htm\)](/uploads/Documents/pubs/PF104-Appendices/ArabReformIndex_files/ArabReformIndex.htm) (html)
- [Arab Anti-American Protest Database \(/uploads/Documents/pubs/PF104-Appendices/ProtestDatabase2009.mdb\)](/uploads/Documents/pubs/PF104-Appendices/ProtestDatabase2009.mdb) (downloadable MS Access Database)
- [Country Case Studies \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PF104-Appendices/CaseStudies.pdf\)](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PF104-Appendices/CaseStudies.pdf) (pdf)

THE AUTHOR

David Pollock is a senior fellow at The Washington Institute, focusing on the political dynamics of Middle Eastern countries. Previously, he served as senior advisor for the Broader Middle East at the State Department, providing policy advice on issues of democracy and reform in the region, with a focus on women's rights. He also helped launch the department's \$15 million Iraqi Women's Democracy Initiative and the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council, working directly with advocates across the Middle East. An eminent scholar of public opinion and political behavior in the Middle East, he has authored many works on the subject, including the widely read Washington Institute publications *Slippery Polls: Uses and Abuses of Opinion Surveys from Arab States* (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC04.php?CID=290>) and *The 'Arab Street'? Public Opinion in the Arab World*. (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC04.php?CID=39>)

Cole Bunzel and **Curtis Cannon** are former Schusterman young scholars in the [Program on Arab Politics](#)

(<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateI02.php?>

[SID=1&newActiveSubNav=Program%20on%20Arab%20Politics&activeSubNavLink=templateI02.php%3FSID%3D1&newActiveNav=researchPrograms](#)) at The Washington Institute.

• 100 PAGES

RECOMMENDED



BRIEF ANALYSIS

[An Israel-Lebanon Agreement May Not Be Worth the Costs](#)

May 14, 2024

◆
David Schenker

[\(/policy-analysis/israel-lebanon-agreement-may-not-be-worth-costs\)](#)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

[Tracking Anti-U.S. Strikes in Iraq and Syria During the Gaza Crisis](#)

May 14, 2024

◆
Michael Knights,
Amir al-Kaabi,
Hamdi Malik

[\(/policy-analysis/tracking-anti-us-strikes-iraq-and-syria-during-gaza-crisis\)](#)



ARTICLES & TESTIMONY

[The Arab Approach to Mediation—Reshaping Diplomacy in a Multipolar World](#)

Spring 2024

◆
Nickolay Mladenov

[\(/policy-analysis/arab-approach-mediation-reshaping-diplomacy-multipolar-world\)](#)

TOPICS

[Arab & Islamic Politics \(/policy-analysis/arab-islamic-politics\)](#)

[Democracy & Reform \(/policy-analysis/democracy-reform\)](#)

[U.S. Policy \(/policy-analysis/us-policy\)](#)