Introduction

You'll have to forgive my optimism. I was born and raised in a small Minnesota farm town named after Owatonna, a young, Native American "princess" who, legend has it, was restored to good health from her deathbed by drinking the clear, cold water that gushes to Earth from the area's natural mineral springs. That often-frozen but fertile land is also the place where many Scandinavian and northern European immigrants, including my own ancestors, later homesteaded in North America.

Growing up with the triumphant legend of Princess Owatonna may help explain why the perspective I advance in this book doesn't consider human beings to be hopelessly inscribed into determining statuses and roles, imprisoned by the ideological and cultural structures and institutions that surround and guide them.

But let's be realistic. No rational or responsible account of the global scene today can underestimate the destructive intentions, activities, and consequences that are brought to bear by the world's major political, economic, and religious power brokers. We all have personal experiences that testify to the widespread presence of that kind of hegemonic influence. I myself left that idyllic little farm town in southern Minnesota to enlist in the US Army at age 18, only to endure a lengthy tour of duty in Vietnam as a military journalist and broadcaster with the same combat outfit that, as of this writing, was patrolling the mean streets of downtown Baghdad. It was there, in the central highlands of what was then South Vietnam, that many of my friends were killed, and where I per-

sonally witnessed with horror some of the same kinds of torture applied to Viet Cong suspects that were meted out by the American military police at Iraq's Abu Ghurayb prison. While in Vietnam I kept trying to determine the purpose for our being there, for the massive violence, the mayhem, the deep sorrow. I found no satisfying explanation. By the time I turned 21 my way of looking at the world, and especially at the United States, had changed radically. Since then, American political and economic hegemony, buttressed by unparalleled military power and cultural influence, has become the predominant ideological force in the world – certainly not always with positive, uplifting consequences. Never before has the power of America been so great as it is today, in fact, and never before has its standing in world opinion been so low.

So, if I'm an optimist, then I'm an informed optimist.

No doubt ideology and culture impact human populations in powerful ways, frequently to their detriment. But that fact alone does not tell the whole story. Whether speeding along in the fast lanes of the information superhighway, or meandering slowly along the winding paths of the cultural countryside, people never function simply as passive subjects, mere victims of their increasingly diverse and interconnected social and cultural worlds. They actively engage those worlds as subjective agents who struggle on their own behalf, and on behalf of their various partnerships, communities, and causes to bring meaning, dignity, influence, and pleasure into their lives.

Because of the United States' massive impact on the world, it's never easy for an American to write credibly about the positive potential of mass media, information technology, and the global flows of culture – among the main themes taken up in the pages that follow. That challenge has never been greater. American hegemony – which could, and should, serve the world as an altruistic, productive, unifying force – has in many ways devolved into just the opposite. Promises of global peace and prosperity that were forthcoming in the West as the Soviet Union disintegrated have yet to be fulfilled. Instead, national and ethnic differences have sharpened: "Since 1989, the world has seen the proliferation of ethnic conflict, the rise of militant Islam, the intensification of group hatred and nationalism, expulsion, massacres, confiscations,

calls for re-nationalization, and two genocides of magnitudes unprecedented since the Nazi holocaust" (Chau 2003: 123).

Thankfully, there has been no shortage of critical analyses of American foreign policy and the neoconservative doctrine behind it in the early twenty-first century, especially as the violent intervention in Iraq turned into a shambles. But blaming America or the West ("Occidentalism") for the world's problems today – however tempting and in some ways understandable as that may be – is far too easy, reductionist, and misleading. As recent history makes clear, other potent forces are at work. Fundamentalism in all its primary forms has become the most intractable obstacle to greater inter-civilizational tolerance and understanding. By fundamentalism, I refer to a way of thinking held by groups of individuals who subscribe to an unassailable system of beliefs, desire certainty above all else, and aim to amass the power needed to impose their worldview over others (Sim 2005: 21, 28). We normally think of fundamentalism in religious terms, but nationalist and economic fundamentalisms also exist. They often interact. Alarming evidence of these interfused fundamentalisms can be found in the dictates of American foreign policy, for example, especially as they materialized during the presidential tenure of born-again patriot-businessman George W. Bush.

The United States is distinctly religious among the more developed nations of the world, and the intensifying presence of Christian fundamentalism in American politics and culture is extremely worrisome, especially considering the military and economic might wielded by the world's only superpower. But fundamentalist Islam – whose core cultural values are least compatible with the modern world, and whose ideological force has been least held in check by democratic secular authority – must also be given special critical attention by scholars and citizens. Under the relentless, penetrating gaze of the media, sharp differences between the core principles of Islamic fundamentalism and the basic values of global modernity are becoming increasingly visible, discussed, and debated. The religious cartoon controversy of 2005, the death penalty case of the Afghan man, Abdul Rahman, who was tried for converting to Christianity in 2006, and the killing by religious extremists of three male Iraqi tennis players later the same year for wearing short pants – not to mention all the horrific acts and failed plots of

Islamic terrorists – epitomize the cultural contrasts and demonstrate the international media's ability to bring such differences to light. Because of its extraordinary importance, a straightforward inquiry into the ideological and cultural underpinnings of Islamic fundamentalism, and an exploration of how media, the culture industries, and information and communications technology expose those realities – certainly *not* an assault on Muslim people – serves as the primary analytical theme that runs throughout this book.

Understandably, media coverage of Muslim fundamentalism so far has focused on the acts and plans of deadly terrorism perpetrated by fanatical Islamists. But the problem is much larger than that. As Sam Harris asserts in *The End of Faith*, "the evil that has finally reached our shores is not merely the evil of terrorism. It is the evil of religious faith at the moment of its political ascendancy" (Harris 2005: 130). Harris and others blame all religious fundamentalisms – including Christian fundamentalism and orthodox Judaism – for fueling the global cultural crisis, but also argue that Islam poses special difficulties that must be addressed in a way that is unencumbered by the sometimes unreflective and overly apologetic sentiment of cultural relativism. While the harsh political, social, and economic histories and current conditions of much of the Middle East, as well as the interventionist policies of Western powers, contribute much to the rise of Islamic terrorism, these circumstances do not sufficiently explain the root cause of the problem. Dogmatic religious ideology – which cumulatively permeates and influences the totality of social, cultural, and political practice – has greatly precipitated the downward spiral of the Middle East over many centuries.

Islam has not been "hijacked by terrorists," a catchy claim put forward by politicians and repeated uncritically by the media. Terrorists, as human beings, have themselves been hijacked by a religious ideology and political vision that threatens to brutally eliminate all who oppose it. The terrorists have company. As Syrian-born Islamic scholar Bassam Tibi soberly points out, "the terrorists of New York and Washington were not a crazed gang, inasmuch as they represent an existing significant stream with numerous followers within Islamic civilization. We need to be honest, acknowledge this, and face the corresponding facts" (Tibi 2002: xvi). After researching the lives of the 19 terrorists of 9/11,

Los Angeles Times reporter Terry McDermott (2005) concluded that they were "regular guys" simply unable to say "no" to God. We got the same kinds of reports about the middle-class Pakistani-British men who blew up the underground trains and bus in London four years later. Moreover, the Islamist terrorists weren't "cowards, as they were repeatedly described in the Western media, nor were they lunatics in any ordinary sense. They were men of faith – perfect faith, as it turns out – and this, it must finally be acknowledged, is a terrible thing to be" (Harris 2005: 67). So while various particular groups threaten the world with religious and political terrorism, it is the far broader set of values, practices, and discourses of fundamentalist thought – especially the profound link between religion and culture – that must be critically addressed.

Although religion provides considerable spiritual comfort and guidance for individuals and helps to promote altruism and public service in societies, in the larger sense it also functions as dominant ideology and must ultimately be understood as such. This means that Islam has not simply been converted into political ideology for sinister purposes; the religion itself is deeply ideological and, because of its untestable claims of infallibility, is subject to extreme interpretations and uses. These debilitating tendencies are not peculiar to Islam, of course. Christians, Jews, and Hindus have plenty to account for in the past and the present. Fundamentalist Islam looms as a distinct and compelling case, however, because most of the Islamic world – especially the symbolic center of the Islamic universe, the Middle East – has yet to undergo a transition that even vaguely resembles what Europe and North America underwent during the Enlightenment 300 years ago. Consequently, many Muslim societies have not benefited sufficiently from science and reason to be able to confidently relegate religion to a less conspicuous, more personal, and generally peaceful role. Instead, theocratic authority, repressive and undemocratic political rule, and contiguous cultures of ignorance and poverty interact to stymie social, cultural, and economic development. Muslim societies have had to confront a rapidly modernizing and globalizing world which they are not well prepared to engage. The resulting culture shock has created a crisis of identity that contributes mightily to the rise of religious radicalism.

Lamenting how the rigid and restrictive Islam of the Middle East and South Asia compares with religious and civic life in the West, Irshad Manji, a Canadian Muslim, argues that only the exercise of fundamental civil liberties, especially free expression, can diminish the cultural tendencies that hold back progress in the Arab and Islamic world. Manji implores non-Muslims to challenge Islamic believers to "leverage their freedom" and modernize. "Non-Muslims do the world no favors by pushing the moral mute button as soon as Muslims start speaking," she says. "Dare to ruin the romance of the moment" (Manji 2003: 186, 192).

Doing so has been difficult because religion and religious culture – even the explicitly ideological aspects – have traditionally been considered off-limits to interrogation and criticism, especially in the academic world. This has been particularly true when the Arab-Muslim region is scrutinized. Scholarly attacks on capitalism, communism, fascism, Marxism, nationalism, racism, Orientalism, even feminism, can all be condoned, but the slightest questioning of religious ideology and practice – arguably the most influential social and cultural force in the world today – is steadfastly avoided. Except for religious studies departments on college campuses, where most professors have vested theological interests and dutiful personal biases, religion has been given a pass as an object of critical scientific inquiry. As the philosopher Daniel Dennett observes, all believers of the major religions "have been taught that any . . . questioning is somehow insulting or demeaning to their faith," a way of thinking which conveniently wards off any threat of skepticism (Dennett 2006: 207).

Against all odds, but also in a way that makes perfect sense, Muslim women like Irshad Manji have been at the forefront of the post-9/11 critique of Islamic ideology. In Pakistan, Mukhtar Mai, a victim of a gang rape that had been imposed on her to punish her family, became a global symbol of human rights and women's resistance to tribal Islam. Women authors such as Seyran Ates, Necla Kelek, and Serap Celili have described the practice of selling young women in Turkey to Turkish men in Germany and the pervasive physical and mental brutality many women suffer in the Turkish diasporas there. The film *Chaos* by Coline Serreau in France documents the plight of young Arab women trying to escape homes ruthlessly dominated by men. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a

Somali Muslim immigrant who was living in Holland at the time, wrote the script for *Submission*, a short film about domestic violence against Muslim women in the Netherlands – a political act that led to the killing of the film's director, Theo Van Gogh, by a Dutch Islamist, and police protection for her.

The struggle over women's rights, more than any other issue, reveals the moral double standard that characterizes much of the mainstream Muslim world. For that reason, the most impassioned and revolutionary voices now being heard are those of women. Most of the women described in the previous paragraphs live in nations where Islam is a minority religion – Canada, Germany, France, Holland – and where the individual rights of all citizens are protected. The women are telling their stories in the West, and are being heard mainly by sympathetic, non-Islamic Westerners. In 2006, however, another outspoken (former) Muslim woman reached a different audience with an even more sweeping and polemical message. Wafa Sultan, a political refugee from Syria living in the United States where she works as a psychologist, appeared on Al-Jazeera, the Arabic-speaking satellite television network based in Qatar, to sternly criticize the very basis of Islamic religion, history, and culture. We are witnessing "a clash between two opposites, between two eras," she said. "It is a clash between a mentality that belongs to the Middle Ages and another mentality that belongs to the 21st Century. It is a clash between civilization and backwardness, between the civilized and the primitive, between rationality and barbarity" (Middle East Media Research Institute 2006).

What all these women have in common, besides unconscionable suffering, a personal awakening, and the courage to stand up to sources of oppression, is the opportunity for the first time in history to air their grievances through channels that are capable of reaching a large audience, giving great exposure and credibility to their subversive messages. Part of Muslim women's relative powerlessness in the past stemmed from a systemic denial to education for many and a near complete lack of access to technologies of expression. Modern mass media, the internet, the culture industries, and immigration to Western nations have changed the landscape immeasurably. New voices have been empowered as a result. Irshad Manji, for example, parlayed a cable television program in

Toronto into a best-selling book, *The Trouble with Islam Today*, which has been translated into dozens of languages and sold around the world. She also hosts a website to inform and recruit other "Muslim refuseniks" to the movement (www.muslim-refusenik.com), and has become a global media personality. International television news reports broke the story of Mukhtar Mai in Pakistan, whose vital cause was picked up by human rights organizations and diffused globally online, creating a high-profile, celebrated role model for women along the way. The writers in Germany published their cultural exposés in European languages, which then attracted considerable attention from electronic, print, and digital media worldwide. The film industries of France, Holland, and elsewhere financed the critical work of Coline Serreau, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and others. Wafa Sultan's uncompromising assault on Islam originally took the form of essays she wrote for a reformist website hosted by American Muslims. Her comments were repeated, praised, and attacked on Middle Eastern media and websites and, as her fame grew, Sultan was invited to appear on Al-Jazeera. The remarks she made during an interview there (only a small portion of which was cited in the previous paragraph) were immediately translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), which also made a video clip of her appearance available. It has been accessed more than a million times.

Compare these media developments with what happened in the famous case of the small Danish newspaper that in late 2005 published cartoons depicting Muhammad, the historical figure considered by Muslims to be the main prophet of the faith. Frustrated by an inability to find artists who would render images of Muhammad for a book about his life (for fear of reprisal from extremists), the newspaper solicited and published images of Muhammad "as you imagine him." The images insulted many Muslims. We all know what happened next. Anti-Western rioting continued for weeks throughout much of the Muslim world. Embassies were burned, symbols of Western culture were destroyed, boycotts of Danish imports were imposed, and some 50 people lost their lives – especially in Nigeria, where Muslims attacked Christians and Christians counterattacked to avenge their deaths.

Two discursive themes emerged from the worldwide attention given to the cartoon controversy. First was the question of whether

the Danish newspaper – and other media who later supported the principle of free speech and expression by reprinting or transmitting the images – should have published the cartoons in the first place. Islamic religious ideology prohibits *any* graphic depiction of Muhammad. For many Muslims, and not just the extremists, publishing any such representations, especially by non-Muslims, signifies blasphemy perpetrated by infidels against the beloved prophet. Respect for the sanctity of religion, the conservative argument goes, should cause anyone to refrain from making such potential "insults." The second discursive theme concerns the highly visible and immoderate reaction much of the Muslim world gave to publication of the cartoons. International news agencies not only presented images of outraged Muslims demonstrating in various parts of the world, but also investigated how their rage was further provoked by leaders within Islam, including a troupe of mullahs who traveled to the Middle East from Denmark with the expressed purpose of using the cartoons to stir resentment.

The violent reaction to the cartoons spurred *New York Times* columnist David Brooks to argue insightfully that the controversy was not just about different ideas, but about a "different relationship to ideas." He pointed out that in the West, "images, statistics, and arguments swarm around from all directions. There are movies and blogs, books and sermons. There's the profound and the vulgar, the high and the low . . . By swimming in this flurry of perspectives, by facing unpleasant facts, we come closer and closer to understanding" (Brooks 2006: A27). There is little room for absolutes or ultimate truths – the metaphysical certainties that underpin all fundamentalisms – in any civil society. In the case of the cartoon controversy, there was a distinct refusal of dialogue in most of the Muslim world. At minimum, according to Sam Harris, a civil society

> is a place where ideas of all kinds can be criticized without the risk of physical violence. If you live in a land where certain things cannot be said about the king, or an imaginary being, or about certain books, because such utterances carry the penalty of death, torture, or imprisonment, you do not live in a civil society. (Harris 2005: 150)

Any political-cultural force that speaks and acts with a fundamentalist mindset must be subjected to the same powerful criticism and response that was given to oppressive autocracies of the past, including last century's nemeses from the right and left – state fascism and communism. That was the key argument advanced in the seminal work of the twentieth-century philosopher Karl Popper (1945). For Popper, an open mind and the free exchange of ideas are essential for questioning and reducing the power of institutional authority of any kind, and for finding provisional peace among diverse peoples, a principle that applies particularly well in today's globalized environment. In the midst of the cartoon dispute, for instance, Robert Menard, Secretary General of the French-based NGO (non-governmental organization) Reporters Without Borders, said: "I understand that [the cartoons] may shock Muslims, but being shocked is part of being informed" (Menard 2006). And Slovenian cultural critic Slavoj Zizek argues that Islam – as is the case with all religions – must be subjected to a "respectful, but for that reason no less ruthless, critical analysis. This, and only this, is the way to show a true respect for Muslims: to treat them as serious adults responsible for their beliefs" (Zizek 2006: 12).

Social progress always exacts a price. Living in a vibrant democracy means feeling slightly offended all the time because differing opinions must be, and will be, expressed. But criticism of ideology or culture, no matter how necessary or truthful, is not the point at which any good analysis or plan of action stops. Hurt feelings ultimately should help move a society forward. How can this happen?

Karl Popper also believed strongly that sincere and informed optimism, even in the face of formidable structural barriers, is a moral duty. Today's geopolitical realities and sensitivities are daunting indeed, "yet there is terrific promise," according to modernist King Abdullah II of Jordan, a key Middle Eastern Muslim voice in current discussions. Abdullah's sources of inspiration and hope correspond with the central themes promoted in this book. Breakthroughs in the generation of human knowledge, innovation, communication, and education will be crucial. Introspection and self-criticism will be essential. In the landmark Amman Message delivered in November 2004, Abdullah (2004b) asked Muslims to find the courage to adapt to modern complexities and demands by

interpreting the Koran and the life of Muhammad in ways that promote a nuanced and relativized sense of global citizenship. This means "honoring all human beings," he said, and recognizes what he calls the Koranic "deep principles" of unity, peace, moderation, and security. King Abdullah imagines "open, modern, civil societies rooted in true Arab-Islamic values" that embrace "tolerance and respect for others, belief in the rule of law, the equal dignity of all people, and the pursuit of excellence" (Abdullah 2004c).

The King of Jordan called for visionaries to come forward – "people with the courage to visualize positive change and the commitment to achieve it" (Abdullah 2004a). One of those visionaries who has gone public with a particularly good idea is Abdullah's royal partner herself. Jordan's Queen Rania argues that real potential exists now for a global moral consciousness to emerge from the widely shared political and cultural discourses that have been instigated and maintained by the expanding reach and impact of contemporary global communication. The near universal ability of people to leverage an unprecedented range and quantity of information and cultural resources, and to help create those resources themselves, have become defining characteristics of the current era. These key developments offer real hope for increasing tolerance and decreasing violence in our ever more connected and populous world.

This book focuses on *how* and *why* today's communications technologies and cultural resources offer that hope. Because of the unprecedented challenges it poses today, the case of Islamic fundamentalism is presented in these pages as the primary illustration of both the problem and the potential long-term solution. But the principles and processes discussed here extend well beyond the contours of current realities. To borrow an expression from sociologist Robert Putnam, who was proposing remedies for the deteriorating American civil society, it is essential today to create "bridging social capital" on a global scale and "to connect with people unlike ourselves" (Putnam 2000: 411). In order to develop this social capital and create greater moral consensus we must first be able to see and hear those "others." That's where the quartet of communication resources featured in this book – mass media, the culture industries, information technology, and personal communications technology – offers such great long-term promise.

Communicating shared values and reaching a meaningful level of moral agreement appeal intuitively because of the humanitarian benefits these ideas seem to promise; such developments might eventually help reduce human suffering. Theoretically, the ideas are attractive because they offer an alternative to the lack of structure and perceived uncertainty of the postmodern world. But as the philosopher Kwame Appiah (2006) has written, any real hopes for developing reasoned, cross-cultural agreement about values may be quite difficult to realize. Basic cultural principles, especially those inscribed in and reinforced by religious myths and rituals, are particularly difficult to dislodge even in the face of incontrovertible empirical evidence to the contrary. Appiah suggests that a better way to overcome the well-guarded boundaries of cultural identity may require "imaginative engagement" and transcultural "conversations" that lead to the gradual acceptance of unfamiliar ideas. He writes, "when it comes to change, what moves people is often not an argument from principle, not a long discussion about values, but just a gradually acquired new way of seeing things" (Appiah 2006: 73).

His intriguing main argument posits that constructive cultural change will occur as we simply "get used to one another" (Appiah 2006: 78). Appiah claims that Western societies, for example, have become accustomed to the category of "gay person" now to the point that social progress concerning homosexuality – acknowledging gay rights and the existence of gay relationships, for instance – can move forward. "I am urging that we should learn about people in other places," he says, ". . . not because that will bring us to agreement, but because it will help us get used to one another" (Appiah 2006: 78).

If the disparate peoples of the world are ever going to fundamentally concur on basic moral principles, as Jordan's Queen Rania suggests, or if they will ever be able to get used to each other, as Kwame Appiah maintains, media and communications technology will be the channels that provide the necessary cultural exposure that can promote the change. In the example Appiah gives, for instance, television and film have played major roles in creating the categories that made gayness familiar, tolerated, even appreciated by large sectors of European and American societies and increasingly in other parts of the world now, too.

The liberating developments discussed here are not the only ones at play, of course. Dominant ideologies and the traditional systems of social practice that make up national, ethnic, and religious cultures continue to exert enormous influence over their populations. Media and cultural institutions routinely serve these entrenched interests. Reactionary crosscurrents of religious, nationalist, and market fundamentalism further inhibit human development. All these enduring influences accumulate to reflect the considerable "demands of culture."

But, most importantly, the nature of much cultural activity is changing swiftly today with enormous effect. Media, information and communications technology, and popular culture permeate everyday life. Individuals everywhere exercise more autonomy than ever before as cultural decision makers. Obviously, the extent of these developments varies according to the structured circumstances in which people find themselves. But widespread global trends toward personal accessing of film, video, music, and TV "on demand" dramatically symbolize how people everywhere are expanding the range and increasing the control of their cultural experiences to accord with their particular needs, wants, and interests.

This side of the social power equation is what I mean by "culture-on-demand," the central theme of this book. The idea of culture-on-demand strongly emphasizes the role of the individual person in cultural activity and the consequences that are brought about by increased cultural fragmentation and autonomy. Individual persons benefit tremendously from recent improvements in the modes of information transmission and cultural exchange. But the potential significance and power of culture-on-demand transcends the limits of self-centered cultural conduct. Individuals and groups can also exploit communication and cultural resources in order to encourage and cultivate much broader kinds of human development.

I'll explain in the following chapters what drives this cultural potential and show how it materializes in everyday life. I begin by discussing how the various globalizations, including religious and media globalization, influence contemporary world affairs. I'll show why the power of human expression resides at the core of the book's cautiously positive outlook. I'll introduce cultural

programming, the personal superculture, and the "push and pull of culture" as fresh ways of thinking about the crucial role of the individual person in cultural matters. The theme of globalized Islam recurs throughout the book as we analyze what happens when relatively closed societies confront the openness of today's global communication. We'll explore how intensified media visibility and transparency impact culture and politics throughout the world. And, from an evolutionary perspective that develops throughout the volume, I'll explain why convergent trends in communication and culture ultimately offer the best opportunity for improving inter-civilizational understanding. We will also carefully contemplate the forces that stand in the way of further progress, especially the daunting challenges posed by religious, nationalist, and market fundamentalisms.

The paradigmatic concept to be highlighted as we go forward with the analysis presented here is human communication. Developing cooperative modes of social interaction through human expression and robust communicative exchange has been fundamental to the evolution of *Homo sapiens* as a species so far and holds the key to future progress. How we construct and navigate the multiple frames of reference we use to survive and thrive are the cultural histories now being written.

Those histories have not been, and will not be, bloodless. But they will be more transparent, scrutinized, and hopeful – even when world events are utterly deplorable and discouraging. Stunning examples have become iconic media events of recent history – the falling World Trade Center towers and subsequent terrorist actions, the torturing of prisoners by American military forces and the carnage of sectarian violence in Iraq, the beheading of foreigners by religious fanatics on the internet, the humiliating practices carried out by authorities at Guantanamo Prison, the rioting over religious cartoons, and the destruction of civilian life in the Israeli–Hezbollah conflict, among other visually spectacular incidents. These interconnected, highly symbolic events have been brought to the world's attention *only* because technologically mediated, global communications can no longer be controlled effectively by political leaders and institutions, no matter how powerful, and because people the world over today expect to know what's going on.

The production of images and accounts such as those described in the previous paragraph, the globalized discussions they provoke, and the cultural adjustments that eventually will be made require new ways of thinking about how people invent their ways of being in the world. We may never become a global community of respectful cosmopolites, nor will any variety of fundamentalist thinking ever be fully extinguished. In the short term, reactionary radicalism and violence will increase on all fronts. Hopes for creating sustainable human development in the long term, however, are reasonable and necessary. To be fulfilled, those hopes will depend on the active cultivation of new communication skills and cultural experiences by people everywhere – at minimum by participating in the positive "getting used to each other" process that Kwame Appiah describes. Fortunately, that essential undertaking is already well under way.

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