The Importance of Diplomacy in International Relations: Greeting Cards from World Leaders

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**Abstract:** Will muses on the roll interpersonal relations between world leaders play in international relations, doing so through a series of very personal, imagined greeting cards between key dignitaries.

**Keywords:** interpersonal relationships, international relations, intersectional conflict analysis, art, arts approaches to conflict, Agnes Scott College

**Creative Statement**

How do international relations rely on interpersonal and individual relationships?

Much of international relations study attempts to analyze human nature in the context of world politics, so my project follows suit by highlighting elements of human social life on the international stage. Like how golfing and attending sports games can help to create business alliances, politicians and religious leaders can gain influence in situations by simply showing up. While speeches at these events may seem to be without substance for change, they are quite strategic. Outside of international diplomacy, social capital is a part of our everyday lives. For businesspeople, networking is used to create interpersonal relationships that can be used for economic benefit in the future. For college students, interpersonal relationships can even influence GPA. Visiting office hours and becoming close with professors is shown to be an indicator of a high GPA. The study and applications of organizational behavior show that relationships are the building blocks for successful businesses. Personality, perceived knowledge and even appearance work together in combination with other traits that give certain individuals more influence. In essence, likability is key to power.

**Greeting Cards**

My final project intends to dive deeper into human nature and how it relates to politics. In everyday life, showing up, saying hello, and making small talk can help people to maintain strategic acquaintances. My series of greeting cards details the similarities between these interactions and the interactions of leaders from around the world. My four cards focus on three different recent events: U.S. President Joe Biden’s visit to Northern Ireland, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol’s visit to the United States, and Pope Francis’s visit to South Sudan.
President Joe Biden’s Recent Visit to Northern Ireland

Early April 2023, President Joe Biden made a visit to Northern Ireland to promote peace during a rocky time. President Biden’s efforts to stay non-partisan during his visit to Northern Ireland were noted and helped to paint a wonderful picture of friendship from the United States. On an individual level, President Biden’s actions were impactful worldwide. American corporations, according to President Biden, will benefit from the peace he is working to help create in the UK. American corporations, according to President Biden, will benefit from the peace he is working to help create in the UK. While in the UK, President Biden referred to his Irish American heritage. My card design for this event featured hand lettering in green and orange reading “Irish Roots” and an Irish flag. Inside, it reads: Hello Ireland! I’m excited for my upcoming trip, and the opportunity to explore your beautiful country. I’d like to encourage love and strength throughout this difficult time. Good things come to those who are patient and peaceful. Cooperation will bring the best outcome. Also, did you know that I’m Irish American? Excited to see the country my ancestors came from! — President Joe Biden.”
South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol’s Visit to the United States

On April 27th, 2023, the South Korean President was hosted at the White House for talks about the alliance between the United States and South Korea. This meeting took place on the 70-year anniversary of the alliance being formed. The events of the day consisted of many different cultural showcases from both South Korea and the United States, including President Yoei singing the song American Pie at the State Dinner. This very much highlighted the importance of personality and likability in politics and influence, and for that reason I chose this event to design a card about. The card I designed features blue lettering reading “American Pie” on the front cover and musical notes on the inside. The card reads, “President Biden, I’m very excited to visit you! I feel like we’ve gotten to be good friends, and it makes these state visits enjoyable. I haven’t been to the States in a while, but I do feel some connection. My favorite song as a young man was actually American Pie! I’ll have to sing it someday- karaoke is very popular in my country. Also, looking forward to our discussions about our alliance! — Best Wishes, President Yoon Suk Yeol.”

Pope Francis’s visit to South Sudan

Early in 2023, Pope Francis made a trip to South Sudan to attempt to persuade the people of both Sudan and South Sudan to lay down weapons and find a time of peace. Though there is still increasing violence, it is important to note the diplomacy of a major religious figure. During his visit, Pope Francis made references to a dawn of peace, and warned that hatred was poison. It’s uncertain whether the visit influenced the amount of violence or not, but it certainly could
have helped to delay the increase. The card I designed for this event is red and gold on a white background and reads “Peace + Hope,” words that I believe to embody Pope Francis’s message and beliefs. The card has small gold crosses scattered randomly, and features an Adoration Cross, complete with the Eucharist inside. This is a very powerful symbol in the Catholic Church, as it is believed that Christ’s body truly exists in the Eucharist. By putting Christ on the card along with a message of peace and hope, I feel that I embodied the importance of the Pope’s visit to the Catholic people in that region. Pope Francis’s card to the people of South Sudan reads, “South Sudan, I know this is an incredibly difficult time for you. I will be praying for peace. Please resist the venom that is hatred, and never lose hope. The people of this country will forever remain close to my heart and in my prayers. — Pope Francis”

![Image of Pope Francis's greeting card](image)

*Figure 4: Pope Francis's greeting card to the people of Sudan (Backside). Created by Harper Will.*

**References**


