

League, formally requested that the League's governing council clarify its stance on the meaning of Article 21. The official answer stated that international arrangements such as the Monroe Doctrine could co-exist with the League's covenants but could not override or contradict them. Latin American interpretations of this response varied widely. There was a sense, however, that the League had at last accepted an active role in Latin America. Fischer goes further to argue that this renewed resistance to US interventionism, expressed openly in Havana and at least suggested in the League's response to the Costa Rican inquiry, added to the momentum for a revision of the Doctrine's interpretation by the US government. The League's new position helped pave the way for the Good Neighbor Policy.

While Fischer deserves great credit for illuminating the history the League's relations with Latin America in rich detail, one could argue that his heavy reliance on the official paper trail – both the League's own and that of governments interacting with the League – exaggerates its role. While Fischer is careful not to make exaggerated claims about the League's impact in the western hemisphere, he could have been more explicit in ranking the factors that explain key events or policy shifts. The chapter on the Monroe Doctrine, for example, recognises domestic resistance to US interventionism as a crucial factor in presidents Hoover and Roosevelt's shift towards the Good Neighbor Policy. In light of powerful factors such as domestic pressure, the onset of the Great Depression and the conflict at the Pan-American Conference in Havana, the League's position would appear to have made little difference. Another example would be the League's diplomatic effort in the conflict over Leticia, which Fischer portrays as significant for the peaceful resolution of the affair. He notes that neither Brazil nor the United States sabotaged the effort, which can be attributed at least in part to League diplomacy, but he cites the assassination of Peru's warmongering president, Sánchez Cerro, in April 1933 as 'the decisive factor' (p. 407). Overall, Fischer provides us with a meticulously researched study that confirms the perception of the League of Nations as a largely ineffective institution, even more so in Latin America than elsewhere. The study is significant even if the League was not.

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Darlene J. Sadlier, *Americans All: Good Neighbor Cultural Diplomacy in World War II* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2012), pp. xii + 251, \$55.00, hb.

Given the development of cultural history and Joseph Nye's concept of soft power, it is not surprising that the US cultural offensive in Latin America during the Second World War has drawn increasing scrutiny from scholars. Darlene Sadlier's study offers a broad but detailed overview of the cultural activities of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (CIAA) headed by the multi-tasking Nelson Rockefeller. In pursuing its mission of promoting hemispheric solidarity at home, but especially in Latin America, the CIAA seemed in some ways to take on the personality of its director as it launched projects in every conceivable venue for cultural diplomacy, including film, radio, printed works and promotional activities in libraries and museums. Sadlier explores each of these avenues of activity, examining both the design and implementation of what seemed to be a nearly endless array of endeavours.

The best known of the CIAA's efforts were those in the film industry. The government agency benefited from the fact that Hollywood was in the midst of its

golden age, with film-makers like David O. Selznick and Walt Disney capturing the attention of audiences around the world with their striking visual images and the star power of both human and animated actors. In particular, Disney films including *Saludos Amigos* (1942) and *The Three Caballeros* (1944) highlighted the fantastic aspects of Latin America's natural environment while also promoting the idea of values and goals shared by citizens throughout the Americas. The CIAA's relationship with the film industry involved not only promotion of the Good Neighbour ideal, but also the careful editing of Hollywood's version of the Americas. While discouraging the inclusion of negative Latin American stereotypes in US films, Washington promoted film-making that downplayed racial diversity and poverty in the region. That editing fit both the desire of Latin American states to project what they deemed positive images of their societies and Washington's desire to de-emphasise its own problems with racial discrimination and poverty. Work that strayed outside those guidelines, such as Orson Welles' *It's All True*, would not see the light of day.

Radio broadcasting proved to be more of a challenge. The US radio industry had nowhere near the international influence that the country's films enjoyed. Furthermore, the Germans had developed an active radio propaganda campaign in Latin America. Nevertheless, the CIAA made rapid strides in creating wartime dramas, segments of musical entertainment and news reports with a decidedly pro-Ally slant on the war. Music proved to be a particularly effective medium, with Latin American audiences showing a particular fondness for classical works and jazz. Despite the collapse of his film venture for the CIAA, Orson Welles did his part on radio; his programme *Hello Americans* made him one of the most recognised radio personalities in the region, perhaps because his broadcasts offered a more complex and sophisticated version of the CIAA's American solidarity message than the organisation's other propaganda efforts.

The CIAA excelled at penetrating the print media, with more than 1,000 Latin American newspapers publishing its stories and photos by 1945. The agency also produced strong results with a flashy photo magazine, *En Guardia*, while translated editions of *Readers Digest* proved to be a major success. The CIAA's reach extended even further into pamphlets, posters and still photos, as well as translations of books by both US and Latin American authors. It also worked to expand and strengthen US cultural institutes in the region, especially through the creation of local coordinating committees.

On the other hand, the agency's efforts to promote better understanding of Latin America and Latin Americans in the United States received limited funding and attention. One exception was the effort of Walter Laves, who headed the Division of Inter-American Activities that focused on the domestic project. Laves tried to mitigate the effects of racial prejudice on the trial of the young Mexican Americans in the Zoot Suit Riots case despite his superiors' efforts to discourage him.

One of the most important questions for both CIAA bureaucrats and scholars is whether and how effectively this dizzying array of initiatives forged a common sense of identity among the people of the Americas. Despite a number of telephone and mail-in surveys, the tools at the CIAA's disposal were rather crude by today's standards of opinion polling, particularly in terms of securing representative samples of the populations which they sought to study. Equally intriguing is the question of whether the appeal of American popular culture, without overt promotion by the state, would have been sufficient to accomplish the same purpose. The author comes down firmly

on the side of the agency's work. This, however, is largely based on a comparison with the Cold War policies that replaced the CIAA's programmes with hard-core anti-communist rhetoric and fearmongering, rather than a new assessment of how effectively this early version of soft power actually worked. That assessment reflects a larger issue with the book.

In examining the various initiatives of Rockefeller's agency, the author does explore how gender and race influenced the images of both the United States and Latin America that were fashioned in an effort to build a sense of common identity in the Americas, but there is not a great deal that is new or original in these observations. Not surprisingly, even the progressive propaganda of the CIAA still presented stereotypes about the exoticism of Latin America and the wholesomeness of its northern neighbour's culture, although it did diminish one stereotype by extolling the contribution of women to the war effort. The author has done a masterful job painting a richly detailed history of the CIAA, but now there is an opportunity to develop that material into a more nuanced analysis of the agency, its work and its effectiveness.

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Thomas C. Mills, *Post-War Planning on the Periphery: Anglo-American Economic Diplomacy in South America, 1939–1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. x + 283, \$105.00; £70.00, hb.

There exist so many obvious proofs of the tightness of the decades-long alliance between Britain and the United States, such as their recent joint wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, that one could be tempted to see the 'Special Relationship' as almost inevitable or natural. Historians, however, have long rejected this by exposing rifts between the two countries, even when they were faced by their greatest threat, aggressive global fascism during the Second World War.

Post-War Planning on the Periphery suggests that the two allies mistrusted one another when it came to their wartime economic policies in Latin America. The US government acted in ways that hurt British influence in South America, with a wartime movement towards an 'economic Monroe doctrine' that would exclude from South America all European influences, even those of allied Britain. According to Mills, this contradicted the overall global push by the United States towards more 'multilateral' economic policies.

In the most interesting parts of this book, Mills analyses the personal papers of Cordell Hull, Sumner Welles and lesser figures in the US State Department, and also official correspondence from the British Foreign Office. With this material, Mills creates intriguing descriptions of the course of negotiations between the United States, Britain and the Brazilian government over the control of Radiobrás and the lucrative concession to electrify the Central Brazilian Railway.

However, one wishes that Mills had shown more regard for the many contexts of the events in this book. The back stories and the future lives of some of the decision-makers might help to provide more of a sense of what they were thinking. The lack of historical context is also apparent in his failure to describe the Anglo-American relationship in South America during the Great War just two decades earlier. Mills explains that US officials and businessmen were the ones calling for tougher economic