

Book Reviews

Diana Cucuz, *Winning Women's Hearts and Minds: Selling Cold War Culture in the US and the USSR*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2023. 336pp. \$85.00, cloth.

I still keep old issues of *America* magazine at my summer house – a Russian-language version from mid-1970-s to the early 1980s. They still haven't lost the glossy look. I remember vividly that for us, Moscow schoolgirls, these magazines were a window on the world beyond the Iron Curtain, a way to look in on life in a far off mystical land that we knew and loved – but only through writers like Dreiser, and Faulkner, and Doctorow. A mysterious and appealing country that seemed so much like our own – and yet, at the same time, was so very, very, different.

The skyscrapers of New York and Detroit, the lights of Los Angeles and California, incredible science advances and amazing roads – and cars, also amazing. Being girls, we were especially interested in the images of women. Always with perfect make-up, always fit, with a Hollywood smile – they lived in the incredible world of fantastic comfort and great customer service. We looked at coffee machines and kitchen appliances that helped them take care of everyday chores, at the make-up that helped them create their glamorous looks, and tried to find something even remotely similar on the black market in Moscow and Leningrad.

Many years later, in the 1990s, when I tried to explain to my American colleagues why the gender agenda was not included in the mainstream changes during Russia's period of democratization, I remembered, that neither Voice of America, nor Radio Liberty – the stations that anyone interested in alternative information sources listened to, – never spoke about women's movements or feminism in the USA. And Russian immigrants mentioned feminists only in a negative light.

And so, a colossal resource of democratic change – the women's resource – was ignored by perestroika's architects. This is a fact that we still have to rethink and redefine in the future. And the official American propaganda of the Cold War years certainly played an important role in the process.

Diana Cucuz' book supports this theory. Her detailed research of American mass media over the course of a few decades allows us to follow the development

of basic trends and gender stereotypes of opposite ideologies. But not only that. She explores an important issue – the gender aspect of cultural diplomacy, the “soft power” of the Cold War years. This is pioneering research that explores new facets of reassessing the Cold War experience and its consequences. The issues raised in the book go beyond purely historical research and give food for thought to those interested in a modern discussion on this topic.

There is no doubt that images of women have always been the most vivid means of both influencing the audience and transmitting the basic cultural code. Soviet magazines meant for both Soviet and foreign audiences (*Rabotnitsa* (*The Female Worker*), *Krestianka* (*The Female Peasant*), the main propaganda illustrated journal *Ogonyok*, *Soviet Woman* – which was aimed at foreign audiences) pushed the message of female happiness in a socialist country – a country that gives women all possible rights and opportunities. A lot has been written on this topic – and an equal lot on the hypocrisy of this approach.

Diana Cucuz’ book analyzes the nature and practice of the gender component of ideological opposition and its transformation by using American magazines (first and foremost, *America*, aimed at Soviet audiences) as examples.

In the first part of the book, “Shaping Women, Gender and the Communist Threat through the Ladies’ Home Journal” the author analyzes the formation and confirmation of the main gender concepts as far as they relate to how both Soviet and American women were presented. She notes that beginning in the 1920’s, “reflecting that either positive or negative commentary depended on the fragile state of US-Soviet relations”(p 91) , but after World War II, the overall message became purposely detailed – and that included gender detailing.

The vital formulas used by the magazine in question after World War II are analyzed – formulas that subsequently became deeply developed within the framework of official American propaganda and published discourse up until the 1990s. These formulas include Modern woman, Happy Homemaker, Special privileges of American Women, and, of course, the female variant of the American Dream. Sustainable concepts, such as the Babushka or Special Hardships of Russian Womanhood also appeared at this time. What we have here is brilliant historical research that allows one to recreate the gender ideogeme construction step-by-step.

The analysis of how John Steinbeck’s and Robert Capa’s famous USSR trip in 1947 was reflected by a woman’s magazine is worthy of note. The goal of that trip, undertaken by two war buddies, was to show that “Russians are people too.” The magazine published a large collection of photos and texts entitled “Women and Children of the USSR,” which had a huge effect on the audience. Both the authors, and subsequently, the readers were taken aback by how hard Soviet women worked, by how difficult their daily lives were. Steinbeck and Capa also wrote about how interested Russian women were in the lives of their American counterparts and how much they wished to get to know American women better. America project creators then used this idea to create one of “soft power’s” most efficient constructs.

The second part of the book, *Selling Women, Gender and Consumer Culture* , is about the gender component of the Cold War, concept work done by the White

House and USA, and especially *America* magazine. This section immerses us into the conflicts and ideas simmering in the 1950s-1960s, reminds us of Truman's and Eisenhower's strategies, about Nikita Khrushchev's first visit to the USA, about the "kitchen debate" between Khrushchev and Nixon at the first American National Exhibition in Moscow opening in 1959, about the Caribbean Missile Crisis, and many other important events of that era.

The main ideas formulated in the first issue of *America* remained unchanged for decades – fashion and femininity, married life, motherhood and family, housekeeping, and, of course, consumerism.

The latter would become the most important element of propaganda aimed at the USSR – the basis of the American Dream which was actively pushed on the magazine's pages and became one of the symbols of "soft power" in the ideological standoff of the coming decades. The chapters about the formation and detailing of the "American Dream" concept on *America's* pages are of particular interest both for researchers and a wider audience, as they help one delve into the depths of propaganda work and discover hidden mechanisms that created the cultural image code and stable stereotypes.

Of particular interest is the chapter about attempts to include information about Civil rights and Women's Rights movements of the 1960-s and 1970-s-America, USSR and a Women's Proper Place. "However, while America's editors never referred to the movement directly, its contributors did... These articles were interwoven with the stories of ordinary women experiencing its effects on their daily life." (p 198). This idea, incredibly, echoes the conclusions drawn by Dina Fainberg, the book *Cold War Correspondents* (Kembridge 2020) – She writes about how journalists in both USSR and the USA, while working within the strict propaganda confines of the Cold War, still managed to give a more detailed and multifaceted picture of the country where they worked and its people, whom they have grown to love.

Diana Cucuz talks about the development of *America* magazine in the context of the development of the Soviet-American relationship, including the on-going attempts to establish cultural and civic dialogue – including that between women. She analyzes the gender aspects of the USSR and USA standoff in mass media and culture. At the same time, the book presents a most interesting snapshot of American journalism in the 1950s-1960s, and talks about the work done by *America's* leading journalists Margaret Mead, Marion Sanders, Eli Ginsberg, and others. Summarizing *America's* experience, the author notes that for better or worse, the magazine played a vital role in establishing dialogue and prolonging openness between the two countries. It had become a part of "cultural diplomacy."

My peers, and our parents, all read *America* and from its pages learned about life in a different country that we've always found fascinating. Even if the magazine didn't cover everything about American life, it still brought us closer together, and helped build a foundation for continuing dialogue and self-analysis.

As Diana Cucuz writes, "America's early Cold War cultural activities, part of what became known as a "golden age of diplomacy" may have accomplished more towards Soviet economic reforms than political pressure or military force

ever could.”(p 227). And one cannot argue with that statement. Diana Cucuz’s book is a most serious contribution to research into analysis of the history of the Cold War, its culture, form-creation and stereotypes, many of which exist to this day. Liberating ourselves from stereotypes and deeply analyzing the recent past make all of us culturally richer – and freer. And Diana Cucuz’s book helps us do just that.

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Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *Between Two Millstones: Exile in America, 1978-1994*, Book 2, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020, xvi. 559pp. Index. \$39.00 Hardcover.

When the Soviet Union stripped Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn of his Russian citizenship and expelled him to the West, he began a twenty-year exile that merged his fight for a global political voice with unrelenting opposition to Soviet power. As cultural memory fades, it is easy to forget that this abrasive, GULAG prisoner-turned-dissident firebrand dominated world news at the height of the Cold War. Part diary, travelogue, boots-on-the-ground research process, and anti-media rant, *Between Two Millstones* is a sprawling personal epic that spans Solzhenitsyn’s exile, the Soviet Union’s collapse, and his blueprint for a New Russia. Today, the Nobel Prize-winning literary giant is considered one of the most influential voices of the twentieth century.

This anticipated second half of Solzhenitsyn’s memoirs, translated from Russian for the first time, picks up after Solzhenitsyn’s controversial Harvard Commencement Address. As uncensored as a Stalin-era joke, Solzhenitsyn’s autobiography employs an episodic structure where bitter humor and flashes of folk wisdom depict his life wedged between two forces. Trapped between the KGB and a hostile press, Solzhenitsyn argued that they acted like millstones that ground his name to dust and distorted his reputation in Moscow and the West.

At his remote compound in Cavendish, Vermont, Solzhenitsyn recreated Russia with the spiritual and pastoral dimensions of a Tolstoy retreat. Here, he balanced work, family, and celebrity while dodging trespassers who stalked the woods with cameras, eager to snap a candid photograph. Shielded by space and protective villagers, he buried himself in a secluded cabin to produce creative work that gave focus and meaning to his exile. Together, Solzhenitsyn and his wife, Natalia Dmitrievna, launched a bustling publishing house in a corner of the Vermont wilderness. From this rural community, Solzhenitsyn sallied out to do battle on a world scale. A blunt, irritable teller of uncomfortable truths, he left a trail of fans and critics in his wake. For months, he pursued an elusive meeting with Ronald Reagan to discuss Cold War relations. He tilted at media windmills and quarreled with dissidents on both sides of the Iron Curtain. An old friend

from the *sharashka* camps spread vitriolic tales in Moscow, while émigré Andrei Sinyavsky labeled Solzhenitsyn a dangerous authoritarian nationalist.

Between rebuttals and press conferences, Solzhenitsyn dove deep into research for his polyphonic *Red Wheel* series. Sifting through diaries, documents, and letters at the Hoover Institution, Solzhenitsyn also contacted elderly émigrés for material to create his *magnum opus* exploring Russia's descent into revolution. In exile, Russia remained the eternal reference point. This ongoing work connects the disjointed narrative like a crimson thread.

From his writer's retreat, Solzhenitsyn kept his pen on the world's pulse. In the 1970s-1980s, he led missions to Britain, Japan, Taiwan, and the Vatican to discuss Communism. He met Billy Graham, Margaret Thatcher, and Pope John Paul II. Rambunctious, omnivorous, and talkative, Solzhenitsyn balked when media exploited his fame. He dodged police escorts. He was not politically correct. When he met Margaret Thatcher, he called the Prime Minister's "thinking processes those of a man" (Solzhenitsyn, 184). Japan brought "a sense of beauty! a sense of dignity! There's 'beauty will save the world' for you" (148). In Taiwan, he saw "far too many temples" but "no enervating daytime television" (160).

Back from his travels, Solzhenitsyn battled propaganda, his problematic portrayal in Michael Scammell's biography, and a negative media that hounded him with the diversity of opinion that he once craved. By the late 1980s, Solzhenitsyn abandoned his dream to turn America into a new cultural St. Petersburg. Instead, he leveraged his outrage at the "loony left press" (303). Sabotaged attempts to meet Reagan rankled. In 1978, he outraged his audience by declaring that the West had lost its civic courage. In 1983, he accepted the Templeton Prize with the speech, "Men Have Forgotten God." In 1985, the Senate investigated and dismissed accusations that Radio Liberty promoted anti-Semitic broadcasts by reading Solzhenitsyn's *August 1914* novel. Meanwhile, *The Gulag Archipelago*, Solzhenitsyn's colossal Stalinist exposé, remained banned in the Soviet Union despite promises of a *glasnost*' thaw.

Towards the book's end, Solzhenitsyn's tone reveals a psychological shift. He swears off politics. He is less cantankerous, more contented. After the Soviet Union's chaotic collapse, he worked towards Russian reform. Harnessing his experience of the twentieth century as a continuum of upheaval, he created a blueprint for the New Russia. This included a "continuity of state identity," divorced from Party power, and a geographically united Russia. With unsettling implications, Solzhenitsyn rejected an independent Ukraine, lamented lost *oblasti*, and called redrawn Donetsk borders a "tragedy of historic proportions" (400).

Vibrant and compelling, *Between Two Millstones* offers scholars and readers interested in Russian history, the late Soviet period, or twentieth-century literature important insight into Solzhenitsyn's turbulent career outside the Soviet Union.

As he said goodbye to the West in 1994, Solzhenitsyn remained optimistic that he still had a role to play in the history that plowed deep furrows in the Russian earth. Freed from KGB surveillance, he left convinced that he had escaped his dual millstones. Dark shadows settle over the final chapters as Solzhenitsyn anticipates that his influence might not stop Russia from falling into a "Third

Time of Troubles”. Set against a tumultuous world stage, Solzhenitsyn’s evolving narrative is not an American story in the end.

It is a Russian one.

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Natasha Lance Rogoff. *Muppets in Moscow: The Unexpected Crazy True Story of Making Sesame Street in Russia*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2022. 265 pp. Illustrations, no index. \$26.95, Hardcover.

The collapse of communism in Russia in 1991 brought with it a wave of change and a tsunami of Western influences and products, including Coca Cola, McDonald’s, Twix, and *Sesame Street*. The story of *Sesame Street*’s introduction to Russia, and the financial and cultural obstacles that had to be overcome, is a story that deserves to be told. Rogoff studied at Leningrad State University and spent much of the 1980s learning about and telling the story of Russia’s underground culture, establishing herself as a journalist and documentary maker. Several of her documentaries aired on PBS and won awards. She now works at Harvard University in their department of Art, Film, and Visual Studies. In 1993, Rogoff was approached by top officials at Sesame Workshop, the company that produces *Sesame Street*, about helping them to bring the famous children’s show to Russia. What followed was a three-year saga during which Rogoff and her team, both in the United States and Russia, wondered many times if they would ever succeed.

Rogoff went to Russia on her Sesame Street mission at the same time that the country was being flooded with entrepreneurs and opportunists of every stripe and intent. Her descriptions of life and business in Moscow during this fascinating moment in history recall both the optimism and cynicism as some Westerners came to “save” Russia and others came to exploit it. The difficulties that Rogoff and her associates, both American and Russian, encounter as they attempt to secure the things they need to kick off the Sesame Street project – financial backing, broadcasters, office space – capture the chaotic “Wild West” atmosphere of the immediate post-Communist years, which included “rags to riches” transformations for some and desperate plummets into poverty for others. Rogoff describes mysterious deaths and assassinations, the Russian government’s failure to pay state employees for months at a time, and a number of other problems that anyone who visited Russia during these years would readily recall. The most interesting part of Rogoff’s memoir, however, relays the various conflicts that emerged between the Americans and Russians regarding the content and visual elements of the Russian Sesame Street, which would be called *Ulitsa Sezam*. These differences encompass a range of things, from fundamentally opposing worldviews and outlooks – the Russians tended to pitch more depressing story

lines - to specific details about the colors of the new Russian Muppets (light blue = homosexual in Russia), the music (Russians preferred classical pieces), and to what degree it was acceptable to include scenes involving money (“dirty mercantile activities”). Russian collaborators were horrified by the idea of children and Muppets running a lemonade stand, for example, declaring that only desperate poor people sell things on the street. Another idea rejected by the Russians involved a child in a wheelchair being invited to play with other children; the Russians were cynical about this portrayal of inclusivity and noted that wheelchairs were expensive and not everyone could afford one. In general, the Russian collaborators were concerned about presenting scenarios to children that were not authentic or representative of the world around them, the Russian world of sadness and deprivation. Rogoff’s description of these culture clashes, sometimes predictable and sometimes surprising, was the most interesting part of the book. Ultimately, Rogoff and her team are able to overcome all of these obstacles and get the show done, airing its first episode in October 1996.

Although Rogoff’s recounting of the birth of *Ulitsa Sezam* is definitely worth reading, it does have some significant shortcomings. Rogoff spent considerable time in Russia before embarking on the *Ulitsa Sezam* project and her leadership on this project put her in the country for long periods of time over the course of three years, yet she seems unaware or surprised by certain things that she should know. Early in the book, she refers to the white fluff that is cast off by Moscow’s poplar trees each June as “poof,” when it is actually “pukh.” This may seem like a minor point, but anyone who has lived in Russia in the summer will immediately recognize this error, and it immediately makes one wonder how much she actually understands about the country. Rogoff also seems surprised by the overall glum worldview of her Russian associates, a reality that she should be familiar with after spending as much time in Russia and with Russians as she has. Similarly, as she describes setting up the offices for *Ulitsa Sezam* in Moscow, she is frustrated to learn that no one there really knows how to work on a computer or use Excel. Again, Rogoff should have anticipated this. (Incidentally, Excel only became popular widely used in 1992, so why she expected the Russians to be already comfortable with it makes no sense.) Her cultural sensitivity is lacking in other ways, as well. Though she calls one of her associates, Leonid, her best friend, she has no qualms about relaying his English responses with a strong Russian accent in a way that seems mocking to the reader and hardly appropriate for a book published in 2022. (She also does this occasionally for other Russians in the book.) One of the most pervasive flaws in the book, however, is Rogoff’s focus on herself, a characteristic that one often finds in books written by journalists. The reader learns all about Rogoff’s romantic life, from her pessimism about marriage in her future, to meeting her husband, getting married, navigating married life through her travels, and having a baby. Yes, the book is a memoir, but Rogoff’s personal life is of no interest or value to the actual meat of this book and wastes pages that could better be spent on discussing the life of *Ulitsa Sezam* after its successful premiere. Instead, Rogoff, for all practical purposes, ends the story in 1996, dedicating only a few words to what has happened to the show in the last

twenty years, a very disappointing decision given the dramatic events in Russia since the rise of Vladimir Putin. Setting aside these flaws, the book is worth reading.

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Kelly J. Evans and Jeanie M. Welch, *Witnessing Stalin's Justice: The United States and the Moscow Show Trials*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023, xiii. 272 pp. Index. \$155.00, Cloth.

Rarely has a book been worthy of so much praise and so much criticism as this one does!

Shortly after the coming to power of the Bolsheviks in early November 1917, formal diplomatic relations with the United States ceased. A multitude of issues – the signing of a separate peace with the Central Powers at Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, the repudiation of the tsarist government's war debts, the Red Scare, the confiscation of private property, the systematic persecution of organized religion, and the stated goal of the end of capitalism and world revolution – understandably delayed their re-establishment. Only in November 1933 did President Franklin D. Roosevelt officially recognize the Soviet government – an initiative that, among other things, made possible the presence of American diplomats and journalists at the show trials of the mid/late 1930s. *Witnessing Stalin's Justice* is an honest and quite useful compilation of the latter's reactions to the drama unfolding in front of their very eyes, as well as those of liberals, intellectuals, and radicals – many of them fascinated with the world's first socialist state and therefore eager to comment on the nature, meaning, and significance of the show trials.

Following a brief preamble that introduces the previous show trials (the SRs, 1922; Shakhty, 1928; the Industrial Party, 1930; and the Metropolitan-Vickers, 1933), Kelly J. Evans and Jeanie M. Welch focus on the three Moscow Show Trials of August 1936, January 1937, and March 1938 that involved veteran Communist Party members – Grigori E. Zinoviev, Lev B. Kamenev, Georgi L. Piatakov, Karl B. Radek, Alexei I. Rykov, and Nikolai I. Bukharin, to name only Lenin's most important collaborators. To their astonishment, they were accused of a multitude of crimes: treason; plotting war against the Soviet Union in league with Japan and Germany; wrecking of the five-year plans; attempts to assassinate prominent Soviet leaders, take over the Soviet government, and cede Soviet resources and territory to the enemy; and – ultimate and fatal move on their part – collusion with Stalin's arch-enemy, Leon D. Trotsky. Vilified in the Soviet press and in public demonstrations, they all confessed their crimes and, despite the lack of physical evidence, most of them were sentenced to death. There is also a chapter on the purge of the military (army and navy), with Marshal Mikhail N. Tukhachevsky as the main defendant, who were accused of espionage for foreign

powers and of plotting a *coup d'état*. Finally, two chapters on the aftermath of the Moscow Show Trials cover the purge of Nikolai I. Ezhov, the assassination of Trotsky in Mexico, the Doctors' Plot, the death of Stalin, the fall of Lavrenti P. Beria, Nikita S. Khrushchev's Secret Speech at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in February 1956, and the beginnings of Destalinization.

As attested to by no less than 73 pages of endnotes, Evans and Welch have done an admirable job of ferreting out references to the show trials and the purges in US news media, like *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, and *The New Republic*, as well as in the many outlets sponsored by various political groups in the USA. For example, the official Communist Party of America faithfully followed the directives coming from the Comintern, while Trotsky's supporters, encouraged by the conclusions of the Dewey Commission, denounced the charges as frame-ups – a scenario that inevitably sharpened and widened the fault lines among the various factions concerning the Soviet Union. Indeed, in this battle of words, both sides marshalled an impressive arsenal – letters to the editor, name-calling, book reviews, radio and press attacks, literary feuds, and mass meetings – to prove that right was on their side and wrong on the other side.

Both authors are reference librarians at two different American universities – a professional background that has left a deep imprint on the structure and contents of this well-written monograph. The absence of a review of the literature on Stalin's purges is regrettable, as is the authors' decision to limit themselves to a simple *exposé* of the various responses of different interested parties to the show trials. Many readers will be left wondering why the authors did not use these abundant primary sources to develop and defend an original thesis. Sadly, readers looking for the authors' personal opinions will only find a rather banal comment in the very last paragraph – “Americans were fortunate to have such well-qualified and astute observers to this great upheaval as (...) Charles E. Bohlen, Loy W. Henderson, and George F. Kennan,” whose reports left “a valuable legacy which is a credit to their knowledge and professionalism and is a credit to the country they served” (183). As I was putting down this book, I was reminded of Franz Schubert's Symphony No 8 – the “Unfinished” one.

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David W. McFadden, *Origins of People-to-People Diplomacy, U.S. and Russia, 1917-1957*. Abingdon, Oxon, England: Routledge, 2022. 86pp. Hardbound.

This is one of the shortest books I have ever read. In a mere 75 pages of text, David McFadden, a professor of History at Fairfield University, attempts to explore how “religious figures, radical activists, entrepreneurs, engineers, social workers, and others in both the United States and the Soviet Union” forged connections and promoted better understanding between their countries from the

Russian revolutions of 1917 to the official exchange agreements of the late 1950s (p. 1). The Introduction and Conclusion each consist of one paragraph. The core chapters are short, incomplete, and idiosyncratic in coverage. The book is thus much too brief to offer an original and satisfactory account.

In five pages, Chapter 1 describes “Early American Contacts with Soviet Russia.” It relies almost exclusively on McFadden’s first book, *Alternative Paths: Soviets and Americans, 1917-1920* (1993), and therefore offers nothing new to readers familiar with that study. Readers may be surprised, though, by the assertion that “U.S.-Bolshevik relations in the Wilson-Lenin years were marked by a considerable degree of mutual accommodation” (6). While McFadden reminds readers of how American Red Cross representatives Raymond Robins and Allen Wardwell had contacts with Bolshevik officials and how William Bullitt made a fruitless journey to Moscow in 1919, he does not mention President Woodrow Wilson’s refusal to recognize the Soviet government, his authorization of military expeditions to northern Russia and Vladivostok, or his administration’s other efforts to support anti-Bolshevik forces in the Russian Civil War.

Chapter 2, “Quakers and Bolsheviks, 1917-1931,” consists of three pages on Quaker famine relief and reconstruction work in Soviet Russia. The chapter recycles material presented in a book that McFadden wrote with Claire Gorfinkel, *Constructive Spirit: Quakers in Revolutionary Russia* (2004). The brief discussion does not refer to any other scholarship about American relief workers in Soviet Russia, such as Bertrand Patenaude’s massive and exhaustive account of the American Relief Administration.

In the longer (eleven pages) Chapter 3, “Social Gospel Origins,” McFadden asserts that “The origins of what later became U.S.-Soviet people-to-people diplomacy are in the founding of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), the American Friends Service Committee, the International FOR, the International Student Christian Federation,” and efforts by Quaker leaders, YMCA staffers, and Protestant evangelists (12). McFadden makes no attempt to show connections between these groups and the Christian-based citizen diplomacy work in the 1980s by Bridges for Peace and the National Council of Christian Churches. Nor does he establish any connection to the ambitious citizen exchanges organized in the 1980s, though he insists that the efforts in the 1920s “form the basis for the people to people diplomacy of the 1980s” (13). Instead of demonstrating this, McFadden offers a lengthy discussion of the ideas of theologian Walter Rauschenbusch, Quaker professor Rufus Jones, and Quaker leader Wilbur Thomas.

Chapter 4, “YMCA, Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Study Trips,” relies heavily on books by Matthew Miller and Michael David-Fox, though McFadden also faults those studies for being “thin on the Y’s work in Russia in the 1920s” (27) and neglecting Protestant visitors to early Soviet Russia, respectively. The chapter also reproduces extensive excerpts from the autobiography of Sherwood Eddy, which sometimes fill entire pages.

Chapter 5 reviews familiar material on “Fellow Travelers, Social Workers, Entrepreneurs, and Engineers” who went to the Soviet Union in the 1930s. Drawing on the autobiography of W.E.B. DuBois (who is repeatedly called

“Dubois”), McFadden asserts simply that “Soviet Russia was perceived by the black community in the United States as a ‘red Mecca’ of equality” (48), thereby disregarding the views of Black critics of the USSR. McFadden does not cite or include in his bibliography work by scholars such as Kate Baldwin and Meredith Roman that might have helped him to present a more complex and sophisticated discussion.

In Chapter 6, McFadden covers developments of the 1940s and 1950s in eleven pages. Surprisingly, he does not mention the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, a leftist group that organized many people-to-people exchanges. He discusses the influence of jazz in the USSR and the dispatch of American “jazz ambassadors” on international tours but does not refer to a book by Penny Von Eschen on that topic. The chapter leans heavily on books by Walter Hixson and Matthew Evangelista. It does not go much beyond those valuable studies.

Throughout his book, McFadden tries to emphasize the importance of the efforts he describes by asserting that they “prefigured the much more heralded ‘citizen diplomacy’ efforts of the 1980s, which helped end the Cold War” (1). Yet he cites none of the recent scholarship about that citizen diplomacy in the 1980s by historians such as David Foglesong, Matthias Neumann, Margaret Peacock, and Christian Peterson. Near the end of the book, McFadden writes that none of the citizen exchange activities of the 1980s “would have been possible without the strong basis laid by the agreements of 1955-1958” between Washington and Moscow (69). Yet, many of the key American citizen diplomacy groups (such as Beyond War, Bridges for Peace, the Center for US-USSR Initiatives, and Peace Links) launched their nongovernmental projects in the early 1980s, when government-sponsored US-Soviet exchanges had been suspended after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

In addition to not being well grounded in relevant scholarship, McFadden’s slender book is marred by strained arguments, weak organization, excessive quotation, and numerous typographical errors. It adds little to what earlier studies of Soviet-American relations have shown and it is not a pleasure to read.

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Dina Fainberg, *Cold War Correspondents: Soviet and American Reporters on the Ideological Frontlines*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020, 359pp. Index. \$64.95, Hardcover.

In *Cold War Correspondents*, Dina Fainberg considers the relationship between journalism, ideology and foreign relations during the Cold War by analyzing the writings and working conditions of American and Soviet journalists from the end of World War II through the collapse of the USSR. While both sets of reporters argued that they presented the truth about the “Other,” Fainberg’s work reveals that neither side was in fact free from the influence of the ideological

positions adopted by their governments.

The material is divided into three sections of alternating chapters where Fainberg presents first the Soviet picture of journalism in a particular era, followed by a discussion of what American correspondents were experiencing at the same time. The final section consists of only one chapter, which considers the 1985 to 1991 period. These divisions make sense given that they follow the chronology of when particular Soviet leaders – who pursued dramatically different foreign policies and who imposed differing levels of censorship on the press – were in power.

Fainberg begins by showing how the Soviet government overhauled its ideological work in the late Stalin period. In February 1947 *Voice of America* introduced broadcasts in Russian and concerns over the impact of foreign propaganda suddenly made it imperative to critique American life more aggressively in the Soviet press. Information came from two sources: TASS, which had bureaus in Washington, DC and New York, and more literary feature articles by people who had visited the US. TASS's rather dry press releases served as research materials for the Soviet government, but the organization was hampered by the fact that the US government forced it to register as a Foreign Agent in 1947 – something that generated mistrust of TASS correspondents, who often lacked foreign language skills as well. The situation only improved in the early 1950s when better trained correspondents, who often graduated from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), were dispatched and when their working conditions improved via the introduction of bylines and salaries that were partially paid in hard currency.

While the Soviet government was introducing these changes, American correspondents found their working conditions in the USSR became more difficult. They were rarely allowed to travel outside of Moscow and a 1947 law on potential revelations of state secrets criminalized contacts between Soviet citizens and foreign nationals. The journalists responded by working together to evade censorship, but the shrinking size of the foreign press pool made these efforts more difficult as time passed. Editors in the US also tinkered with the content of the dispatches they received since it was assumed that Soviet censorship prohibited reporters from writing freely, and they looked for outside experts to bolster their stream of information that was coming from Moscow. In other words, to quote Fainberg, “American coverage of Soviet affairs became a collective enterprise...” (p. 57) and one that led to a convergence of journalistic and governmental opinions about Soviet affairs.

Given that the Khrushchev era was one of greater international dialogue, it is not surprising that the nature of journalism changed to meet the line established by the new Soviet leader. For example, in 1955 TASS was revamped: some of its staff members were replaced, the organization received more money, and its correspondents were encouraged to both travel in the US and write in a more lively, personalized fashion. At the same time, the largest Soviet newspapers (*Pravda*, *Izvestiia* and *Trud*) set up their own networks of foreign correspondents and devoted more column space to international affairs. Still, Cold War suspicions

ran high, so Soviet correspondents were usually under FBI surveillance, and strict parity in terms of the numbers of correspondents and how their travel was restricted was maintained by the governments of both countries.

On the American side, foreign correspondents stopped assuming that the USSR was on the verge of collapse; now their stories emphasized stability and showed the pride that ordinary Soviet citizens evinced in their country's achievements. Although they worked to reassure readers that life in the US was still superior, American reporters had to admit that "the Soviet people did not consider themselves lacking freedom, nor did they await liberation from overseas." (p. 123)

Section Three of *Cold War Correspondents* looks at the Brezhnev era – years when relations between the US and the USSR fluctuated a great deal and when it was assumed that both countries were experiencing ideological crises. In these chapters, Fainberg describes how Soviet journalists were particularly attracted to stories about the American civil rights and anti-war movements, while their counterparts in Moscow were drawn to write extensively about the dissident movement. Negative press portrayals of American consumerism and social inequality allowed the Soviet government to claim that its society – one where social welfare was guaranteed for all – was the modern ideal. On the other hand, American reporting concerning the problems of everyday life and failing Soviet institutions allowed for a counter-narrative that linked modernity with a high standard of living and greater use of technology to emerge in the US press.

Finally, Fainberg's last chapter uses several case studies to illuminate the roles played by journalists during the closing years of the Cold War. For example, she demonstrates how Nicholas Daniloff's 1986 arrest on charges of espionage raised the question of the extent of Gorbachev's reforms and whether a partnership between the US and USSR could truly be established. That is followed by an excellent discussion of how the various televised "spacebridges" played out. Unfortunately, the events did not always foster greater mutual understanding, in part because many Americans assumed that the collapse of the USSR meant that US ideology had been right all along in its assessment of the "Other."

In sum, this book is a solid piece of scholarship whose nuanced depiction of the travails experience by foreign correspondents during the Cold War reveals much about the nature of journalism, and government desires to control it, during those years.

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