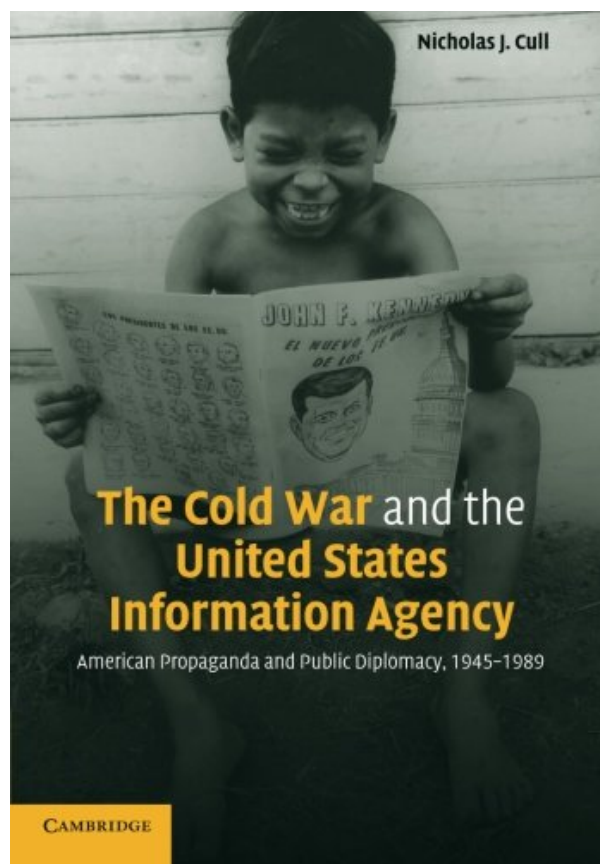
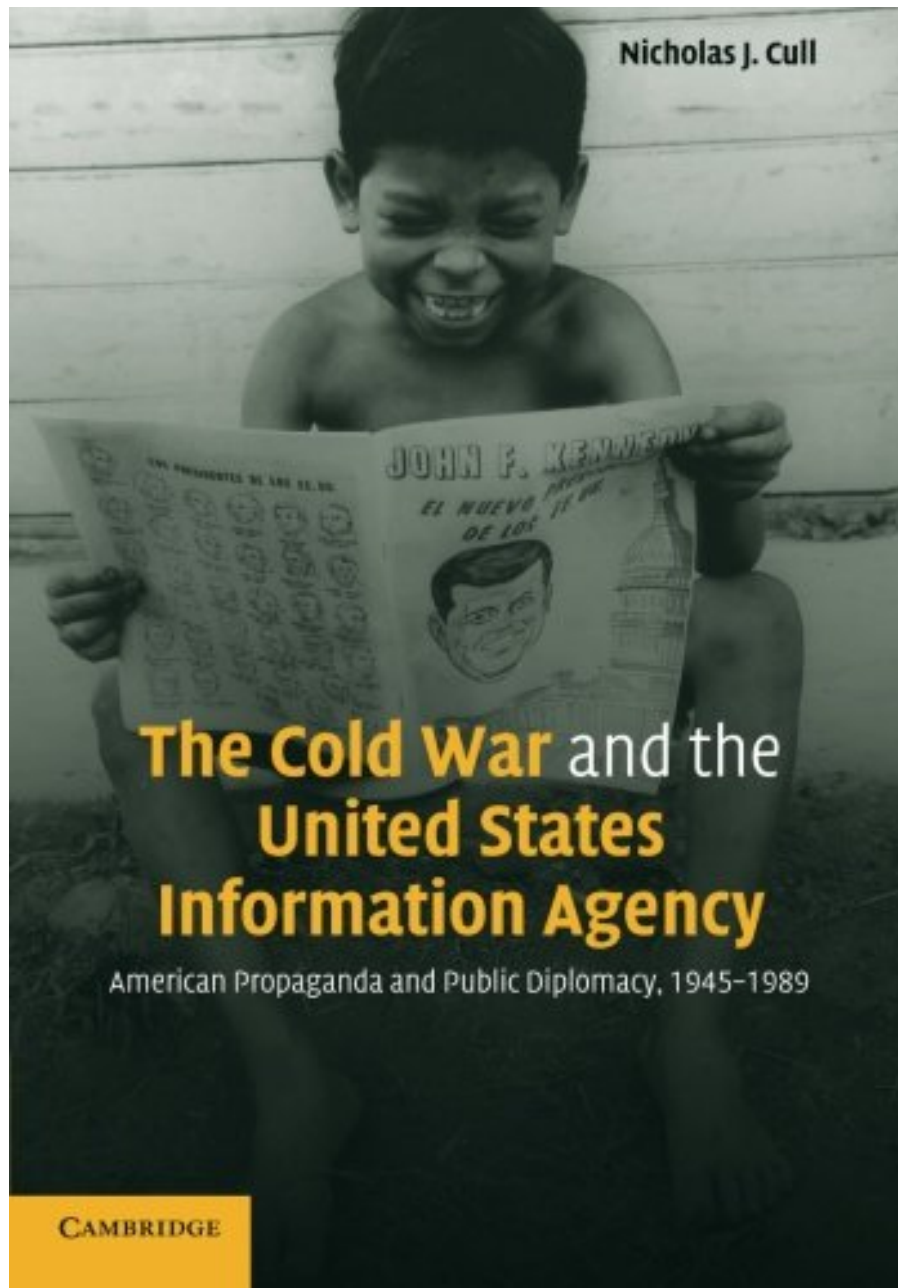


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# The Cold War and the United States Information Agency

American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989

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Published at a time when the U.S. government's public diplomacy is in crisis, this book provides an exhaustive account of how it used to be done. The United States Information Agency was created in 1953 to "tell America's story to the world" and, by engaging with the world through international information, broadcasting, culture and exchange programs, became an essential element of American foreign policy during the Cold War. Based on newly declassified archives and more than 100 interviews with veterans of public diplomacy, from the Truman administration to the fall of the Berlin Wall, Nicholas J. Cull relates both the achievements and the endemic flaws of American public diplomacy in this period. Major topics include the process by which the Truman and Eisenhower administrations built a massive overseas propaganda operation; the struggle of the Voice of America radio to base its output on journalistic truth; the challenge of presenting Civil Rights, the Vietnam War, and Watergate to the world; and the climactic confrontation with the Soviet Union in the 1980s. This study offers remarkable and new insights into the Cold War era.

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Published at a time when American public diplomacy was in crisis due to cuts in the State Department budget, Nick Cull's exhaustively researched history of the USIA - US Information Agency - looks at how the organization was used to disseminate values such as democracy and free speech during the Cold War era. The organization was preoccupied with cultural diplomacy, bringing over artists from various disciplines to countries perceived as being most 'at risk' from communist ideological infiltration. In the days of the Internet, such strategies now look a little old-fashioned, but Cull's highly original book captures the flavor of an era when cultural diplomacy was seen as vital to the national interest.

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