Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire (review)

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analyzes novels set in the Amazon by Mario Vargas Llosa, Alejo Carpentier, and Wilson Harris.

Unfortunately, the author has been badly served by her publisher. There are too many minor mistakes which should have been corrected by a copy-editor: Bryan Edwards is incorrectly given as joint author of a *History of Jamaica*; a ghost anthropologist called David Tedlock appears in the Introduction, although all other references in the book are to Dennis; Alfred Crosby's *Ecological Imperialism* is twice wrongly described as "his book on the Canary Islands"; Wilson Harris's *Guyana Quartet* is weirdly described as "a group of three novels." In addition, the book's index is deeply incompetent: every single town name referred to in the book is referenced, with variant spellings getting their own entry, but no countries; Hudson, W.H., has a different entry from Hudson *tout court*, as does Lewis, Matthew Gregory, from Lewis, Monk, presumably because the indexer could not be bothered to check whether the same person was being referred to.

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Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire. By Gretchen Murphy. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Pp. xi, 195. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $74.95 cloth; $21.95 paper.

Gretchen Murphy presents a novel and provocative thesis: that "USAmericans" understood the evolving meaning of the Monroe Doctrine in relation to fictional works dealing with transatlantic relations. By situating foreign relations within a framework of literary studies, Murphy follows the well-trod path of other transnational American-studies practitioners in Duke's New Americanists series. But while the vast majority of authors exploring the cultural history of U.S. imperialism begin their narratives with the Spanish-American War, Murphy's chronological focus harkens back to 1823 and John Quincy Adams' formulation of spheres of influence. Whether one agrees with the author's use of discourse theory and the conclusions it leads her to, this book is notable as one of the few book-length historical explorations of the evolution of the Monroe Doctrine since Dexter Perkins's work in the middle decades of the twentieth century. It is certainly the most creative exploration of the topic to date.

This is a short book that makes big claims. Murphy argues for the centrality of the Monroe Doctrine to the evolution of U.S. foreign policy into the twentieth century, and asserts that "political formulations" of the Doctrine "relied on certain stories of the nation and the hemisphere as a family," stories "repeated and adapted" in fiction (p. ix). She also makes it clear, however, that the Doctrine was a "highly adaptable referent" (p. 145) whose "flexibility has always provided its power" (p. viii). If her points are not fully supported, it may be because the Monroe Doctrine is too malleable and slippery a structure upon which to safely frame an argument.

In many ways the Introduction, with its multiple illustrations and detailed examination of cartography and the emergence of the idea of the two hemispheres, as well as a lucid overview of the historiography of both the Monroe Doctrine and the field of transnational American Studies, is the most satisfying portion of the book. Large portions of *Hemispheric Imaginings* are devoted to close readings of literary texts, many of which are masterfully rendered, but they occasionally obscure her larger themes. Her analysis of Francis Hawks' narrative of Commodore Perry's 1853 expedition of Japan wonderfully illuminates the multiple meanings the text might have held for readers sensitive to the growing slavery crisis in the United States. But more than once the connections drawn here between foreign policy and literature seem tenuous, as when she links Hawks' work with Nathaniel Hawthorne's *House of the Seven Gables* (1851) largely on the basis that both discuss minstrelsy (a very minor element of Hawks' narrative). While her reading of Lydia Maria Child's novel *Hobomok* (1824) is compelling in its own right, one imagines that the author could have chosen any number of alternate popular writings from the 1820s to support the view that Adams visualized the western hemisphere, as other scholars have maintained, in fraternal terms (nations as brothers), rather than in domestic terms, as Murphy argues.

The episodes that draw Murphy's attention are not always the obvious ones, and it is somewhat disconcerting to read an account of the evolution of the Monroe Doctrine that only briefly mentions the U.S-Mexico War, the filibustering epidemic of the 1850s, and the Spanish-American War. While one has to admire the brevity of her footnotes, at times key secondary sources also seem to be missing, particularly the work of Kristin Hoganson, Robert E. May, and Brady Harrison, all of which seem directly relevant to those events and writings she does consider closely. The flexibility of the Monroe Doctrine may have stymied Murphy's attempts to write a fully coherent account of its evolution and cultural resonance, but American Studies scholars will find much worth considering here.

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MEDICAL HISTORY

Entre médicos y curanderos: Cultura, historia y enfermedad en la América Latina moderna. Edited by Diego Armus. Buenos Aires: Grupo Editorial Norma, 2002. Pp. 455. Notes.

Diego Armus has assembled an impressive collection of methodologically innovative studies of the history of health and society in Latin America. The volume includes twelve essays covering themes ranging from the political uses of vaccination in early nineteenth-century Argentina to contemporary conceptualizations of HIV/AIDS in rural Haiti. Following the title's emphasis on the tension between popular and Western conceptualizations of disease treatment, the essays provide a