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Book Review: The Good Neighbor: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Rhetoric of American Power

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The following review appeared in the November 2014 issue of CHOICE:

U.S. Politics

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Stuckey, Mary E. **The good neighbor: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the rhetoric of American power.** Michigan State, 2014 (c2013). 300p bibl index afp ISBN 9781611860993, \$59.95; ISBN 9781609173906 ebook, \$47.95.

Is there more to be said of the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt? Yes. Stuckey (Georgia State Univ.), one of the nation's leading scholars of political rhetoric, looks deeply at the rhetorical strategy FDR used to govern. She finds a theme running through Roosevelt's foreign and domestic strategies: "the gospel of the good neighbor." Stuckey argues that "the Roosevelt administration ... can best be understood through the metaphor of the 'good neighbor'... to the extent that FDR had a philosophy, his political principles can usually be understood as enacting the principles of neighborliness, articulated through the Golden Rule, and directed at ameliorating national problems of social and economic inequality." And that "Roosevelt understood the United States, in its best expression of itself, to be a good neighbor at home and abroad." This image of Roosevelt may paint him as more of a Frank Capra, Mr. Smith character than is true, but it does give a coherence to what until now has been considered a mishmash collection of pragmatic moves with no real philosophical core. This outstanding book will have a profound impact on the way that Franklin Roosevelt is understood.

—M. A. Genovese, *Loyola Marymount University*

Summing Up: Highly recommended. General readers through research faculty.