

history of us foreign policy

History of US Foreign Policy: A Journey Through Time and Influence

history of us foreign policy is a fascinating tale of evolving principles, strategic decisions, and global impact. From its early days as a fledgling nation cautious of entangling alliances to its emergence as a superpower shaping international norms, the United States' approach to foreign relations has been marked by both continuity and change. Understanding this history provides valuable insights into how the US interacts with the world today and the forces that have shaped its diplomatic strategies.

The Early Foundations: Isolationism and Cautious Engagement

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the history of US foreign policy was dominated by a desire to avoid the complex web of European conflicts. The young nation, having just won its independence, focused on securing its borders and fostering internal growth. The guiding principle was largely isolationist, influenced heavily by George Washington's Farewell Address, which warned against permanent alliances.

The Monroe Doctrine and Regional Influence

One of the first major departures from strict isolationism was the Monroe Doctrine of 1823. This policy declared that the Western Hemisphere was off-limits to new European colonization and warned European powers against interfering in the affairs of the Americas. While not aggressively expansionist, the doctrine asserted a sphere of influence, signaling the US's growing confidence and interest in hemispheric affairs.

Manifest Destiny and Expansionism

During the 19th century, the concept of Manifest Destiny—the belief that the US was destined to expand across the continent—shaped foreign and domestic policy. This expansionism led to conflicts like the Mexican-American War and increased interactions with indigenous peoples and neighboring countries. This period marked the beginning of a more assertive US stance on territorial and economic influence.

From Isolation to Engagement: The World Wars Era

The history of US foreign policy took a dramatic turn during the early 20th century. Initially reluctant to join global conflicts, the US eventually entered both World War I and World War II, marking its transition from isolation to active involvement in international affairs.

World War I and the League of Nations

Although President Woodrow Wilson championed the League of Nations to promote international peace, the US Senate rejected joining the League, reflecting ongoing hesitancy toward deep entanglement in global politics. This illustrates the tension in US foreign policy between idealism and caution—a theme that would recur throughout history.

World War II and the Birth of the United Nations

World War II fundamentally altered the US's role on the world stage. The devastation of the war and the threat posed by totalitarian regimes compelled the US to adopt a more interventionist approach. As a founding member of the United Nations, the US committed to collective security and international cooperation, signaling a new era in its foreign policy.

The Cold War: Containment, Alliances, and Proxy Wars

The history of US foreign policy during the Cold War is marked by the challenge of containing Soviet communism. This period defined much of the US's international engagement from the late 1940s through the early 1990s.

The Policy of Containment

Developed by diplomat George Kennan, containment aimed to prevent the spread of communism without direct military confrontation. This approach led to a variety of strategies, including economic aid like the Marshall Plan, military alliances such as NATO, and involvement in regional conflicts.

Proxy Wars and Military Engagements

During the Cold War, the US engaged in several proxy wars including Korea and Vietnam, where it supported anti-communist forces. These conflicts were costly and controversial but reflected the broader strategy of opposing Soviet influence worldwide. Additionally, the arms race and nuclear deterrence shaped diplomatic relations and defense policies.

Diplomacy and Détente

Despite tensions, periods of détente in the 1970s demonstrated the US's willingness to engage diplomatically with adversaries, leading to arms control agreements like SALT I. These efforts showcased the complexity of US foreign policy—balancing competition with negotiation.

Post-Cold War and the Rise of American Unipolarity

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the US emerged as the world's sole superpower. The history of US foreign policy in the 1990s and early 2000s reflects attempts to shape a new international order based on democracy, free markets, and human rights.

Interventionism and Peacekeeping

The US took an active role in conflicts and crises around the globe, including the Gulf War, the Balkans, and Somalia. These interventions reflected an increased willingness to use military power for humanitarian goals and to protect strategic interests.

Promoting Globalization and Democracy

US foreign policy emphasized expanding free trade agreements, supporting international institutions like the World Trade Organization, and promoting democratic governance worldwide. This era saw efforts to foster stability through economic integration and political reform.

The 21st Century: Challenges and Shifts in Strategy

The history of US foreign policy in the 21st century has been shaped by new threats, shifting alliances, and debates over America's role in the world.

The War on Terror

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, US foreign policy prioritized counterterrorism. This led to prolonged military engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, efforts to dismantle terrorist networks, and significant changes in security and intelligence practices. The war on terror reshaped international relations and US domestic policy alike.

Pivot to Asia and Great Power Competition

Recognizing the rise of China and resurgent Russia, the US began recalibrating its foreign policy to address great power competition. This includes strengthening alliances in the Asia-Pacific, enhancing military presence, and engaging in diplomatic efforts to manage tensions.

Global Challenges: Climate, Trade, and Cybersecurity

Modern US foreign policy increasingly addresses transnational issues such as climate change, cybersecurity threats, and global health. These challenges require cooperation beyond traditional diplomacy and military power, highlighting the complexity of contemporary international relations.

Lessons from the History of US Foreign Policy

Reflecting on the history of US foreign policy reveals several important lessons for policymakers and observers:

- **Balance between isolationism and engagement:** The US has oscillated between avoiding and embracing global involvement, often responding to changing threats and opportunities.
- **Importance of alliances:** Partnerships like NATO have been central to US strategy in maintaining security and influence.
- **Adaptability:** Shifts from containment to counterterrorism show the need for flexible approaches in a dynamic world.
- **Soft power matters:** Diplomacy, economic aid, and cultural influence complement military strength in shaping global outcomes.

Understanding these patterns helps contextualize current debates around America's role on the global stage and the future direction of its foreign policy.

The history of US foreign policy is not just a record of past decisions but a living narrative that continues to evolve. As new challenges arise and global dynamics shift, the United States draws on this rich legacy to navigate its path forward, balancing ideals with pragmatism in an interconnected world.

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the primary goal of early U.S. foreign policy after independence?

The primary goal was to avoid entanglement in European conflicts and focus on consolidating the new nation's sovereignty and economic growth, as exemplified by George Washington's Farewell Address advising neutrality.

How did the Monroe Doctrine shape U.S. foreign policy in the 19th century?

The Monroe Doctrine, announced in 1823, declared that the Western Hemisphere was off-limits to further European colonization and interference, establishing the U.S. as a dominant power in the

Americas and shaping its policy of opposing European intervention.

What role did Manifest Destiny play in U.S. foreign policy?

Manifest Destiny was the 19th-century belief that the U.S. was destined to expand across North America, influencing foreign policy by justifying territorial acquisitions such as Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican Cession, and impacting relations with Mexico and Native American nations.

How did the Spanish-American War of 1898 alter U.S. foreign policy?

The Spanish-American War marked the U.S.'s emergence as a global power, resulting in overseas territories like Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, and shifting U.S. foreign policy towards imperialism and greater involvement in international affairs.

What was the significance of the U.S. adopting isolationism after World War I?

After World War I, the U.S. largely returned to isolationism, avoiding entangling alliances and international commitments, which influenced its initial reluctance to join the League of Nations and shaped its cautious approach to global conflicts until World War II.

How did the Cold War influence U.S. foreign policy?

During the Cold War, U.S. foreign policy was dominated by the goal of containing communism, leading to military alliances like NATO, involvement in conflicts such as Korea and Vietnam, and strategies like deterrence and diplomacy to counter Soviet influence.

What was the impact of the Vietnam War on U.S. foreign policy?

The Vietnam War led to increased public skepticism about U.S. foreign interventions, prompting a reevaluation of interventionist policies, greater congressional oversight through the War Powers Act, and a more cautious approach known as the 'Vietnam Syndrome.'

How did the policy of détente shape U.S.-Soviet relations?

Détente, pursued in the 1970s, was an effort to ease Cold War tensions through arms control agreements like SALT, increased diplomatic communication, and trade, marking a shift from confrontation to negotiation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

In what ways did the post-9/11 era redefine U.S. foreign policy?

After 9/11, U.S. foreign policy prioritized counterterrorism, leading to military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security, and a focus on combating extremist groups globally to protect national security.

How has U.S. foreign policy evolved in response to rising powers like China?

In recent years, U.S. foreign policy has shifted to address the challenges posed by China's economic and military rise, emphasizing strategic competition, trade negotiations, alliances in the Indo-Pacific, and efforts to uphold a rules-based international order.

Additional Resources

History of US Foreign Policy: An Analytical Review of Its Evolution and Impact

history of us foreign policy traces the complex trajectory of America's interactions with the global community, revealing shifting priorities, ideological underpinnings, and strategic calculations. From its nascent days of cautious neutrality to its eventual emergence as a superpower, the United States' approach to foreign relations has been shaped by domestic imperatives, geopolitical challenges, and evolving international norms. Understanding this progression is crucial for comprehending the current dynamics of US diplomacy and global influence.

Foundations of Early American Foreign Policy

The history of US foreign policy begins with the fledgling nation's efforts to establish its sovereignty and navigate a world dominated by European colonial powers. The guiding principle of the early republic was largely shaped by President George Washington's Farewell Address (1796), which advocated for non-entanglement in European conflicts. This isolationist stance was driven by pragmatic concerns: the young nation lacked the resources and military strength to project power overseas.

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, US foreign policy was characterized by a series of pragmatic engagements aimed at securing trade routes, territorial expansion, and recognition. The Louisiana Purchase (1803) exemplified territorial ambition, doubling the size of the country without direct military conflict. At the same time, policies such as the Monroe Doctrine (1823) signaled a more assertive posture in the Western Hemisphere, warning European powers against further colonization or interference.

The Monroe Doctrine and Regional Hegemony

The Monroe Doctrine represents a pivotal moment in the history of US foreign policy, establishing the United States as the dominant power in the Americas. While it avoided direct confrontation, it effectively drew a line between the Old World and the New World, asserting the US's interest in hemispheric affairs. This policy laid the groundwork for future interventions and the broader concept of American exceptionalism.

Expansionism and Imperialism in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

As industrialization transformed the US economy and military capabilities, the history of US foreign policy shifted toward expansionism and imperialism. The Spanish-American War (1898) marked a significant departure from isolationism, resulting in the acquisition of overseas territories such as Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. This period also witnessed the construction of the Panama Canal, which not only facilitated global trade but underscored America's growing strategic ambitions.

The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine further emphasized a more interventionist approach, justifying US involvement in Latin American countries to maintain stability and protect American interests. This era was marked by a blend of economic motivations, strategic concerns, and ideological justifications rooted in the notion of a civilizing mission.

US Foreign Policy and World Wars

The two World Wars fundamentally reshaped the history of US foreign policy, compelling the United States to move beyond regional concerns and engage as a global actor. Initially hesitant, the US entered World War I in 1917, motivated by threats to its security and economic interests. The post-war period saw President Woodrow Wilson championing the League of Nations, embodying an idealistic vision of collective security that ultimately failed domestically.

World War II was a watershed moment. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States mobilized as a decisive military and economic force. The war's aftermath ushered in the Cold War era, during which the history of US foreign policy became dominated by the ideological contest between democracy and communism. The establishment of institutions such as NATO and participation in the United Nations reflected a commitment to multilateralism, albeit framed by strategic rivalry.

The Cold War and the Emergence of Global Superpower Status

The Cold War period marks one of the most intense and prolonged phases in the history of US foreign policy. Containment of Soviet influence became the central objective, leading to a series of military, economic, and diplomatic initiatives worldwide. These included the Marshall Plan for European reconstruction, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and multiple covert operations orchestrated by the CIA.

Features of Cold War Diplomacy

- Bipolar global order with the US and USSR as opposing poles
- Reliance on nuclear deterrence and arms control agreements such as SALT
- Proxy wars in Asia, Africa, and Latin America
- Promotion of liberal democratic values alongside pragmatic alliances with authoritarian regimes

While the Cold War fostered unprecedented American influence, it also generated significant controversies, particularly regarding human rights and the ethics of interventionism. The Vietnam War, in particular, exposed the domestic and international limits of US foreign policy ambitions.

Post-Cold War Adjustments and 21st Century Challenges

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 prompted a reevaluation of US foreign policy priorities. The United States emerged as the world's sole superpower, championing a unipolar international order based on liberal democracy and free markets. The 1990s saw active engagement in regional conflicts such as the Gulf War, interventions in the Balkans, and efforts to promote globalization through institutions like the World Trade Organization.

War on Terror and Shifting Paradigms

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, marked a profound turning point in the history of US foreign policy. The ensuing War on Terror reshaped strategic priorities, leading to prolonged military engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq. Emphasis on counterterrorism, homeland security, and intelligence gathering increased dramatically.

This period also raised critical debates about the balance between security and civil liberties, the effectiveness of military intervention, and the role of international law. The unilateralist tendencies of the early 2000s were later tempered by renewed focus on multilateral cooperation, particularly under the Obama administration.

Contemporary US Foreign Policy: Navigating a Multipolar World

In recent years, the history of US foreign policy has been marked by efforts to adapt to a multipolar global environment, characterized by the rise of China, resurgent Russia, and complex transnational challenges such as climate change and cyber warfare. Strategic competition has intensified, with the US recalibrating alliances and trade policies to maintain its influence.

Key Themes in Current US Foreign Policy

- Renewed emphasis on Indo-Pacific strategy to counter China's growing power
- Reassertion of NATO commitments amid tensions with Russia
- Focus on technological competition, including 5G and artificial intelligence

- Addressing global health and environmental crises through diplomacy
- Balancing isolationist impulses with international commitments

The interplay between domestic political dynamics and foreign policy objectives remains a defining feature, influencing decisions on trade, military engagement, and diplomatic outreach.

The history of US foreign policy reveals a nation continually redefining its role on the world stage, oscillating between ideals and interests, isolation and interventionism. This evolving narrative underscores the complexity of projecting power while navigating an ever-changing international landscape.

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history of us foreign policy: Crucible of Power Howard Jones, 2001 This volume relies on the natural chronology of historical events to organize and narrate the story as the nation's leaders saw it. Using this narrative approach, the tangled and often confusing nature of foreign affairs is uncovered without the illusion that in the past, American foreign relations took place in a well-ordered fashion. From this history, students will understand the plight of present-day policymakers who encounter an array of problems that are rarely susceptible to simple analysis and ready solution.

history of us foreign policy: *US Foreign Policy in World History* David Ryan, 2014-04-23 US Foreign Policy in World History is a survey of US foreign relations and its perceived crusade to spread liberty and democracy in the two hundred years since the American Revolution. David Ryan undertakes a systematic and material analysis of US foreign policy, whilst also explaining the policymakers' grand ideas, ideologies and constructs that have shaped US diplomacy. US Foreign Policy explores these arguments by taking a thematic approach structured around central episodes and ideas in the history of US foreign relations and policy making, including: * The Monroe Doctrine, its philosophical goals and impact * Imperialism and expansionism * Decolonization and self-determination * the Cold War * Third World development * the Soviet 'evil empire', the Sandinistas and the 'rogue' regime of Saddam Hussein * the place of goal for economic integration within foreign affairs.

history of us foreign policy: *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy* Joyce P. Kaufman, 2010-01-16 A third edition of this book is now available. Now in a fully updated edition, this knowledgeable and reader-friendly text gives a conceptual and historical overview of American foreign relations from the founding to the present. Providing students with a solid and readily understandable framework for evaluating American foreign policy decisions, Joyce P. Kaufman clearly explains key decisions and why they were made. Compact yet thorough, the book offers instructors a concise introduction that can be easily supplemented with other sources.

history of us foreign policy: *American Foreign Policy* Daniel S. Papp, Loch K. Johnson, John E. Endicott, 2005 American Foreign Policy in a New Era utilizes the three major approaches to foreign policy analysis giving students an opportunity to obtain a comprehensive 360 degree understanding of U.S. foreign policy. Students will use the methodologies of history and diplomatic history to develop an understanding of past U.S. foreign policy and how the United States became what it is today in global affairs; employ a variety of social science methodologies used to explore the forces that shape and influence U.S. foreign policy; and they will engage in policy analysis to study in depth

five issues-areas in contemporary U.S. foreign policy.

history of us foreign policy: Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations

Michael J. Hogan, Thomas G. Paterson, 2004-01-19 Originally published in 1991, *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* has become an indispensable volume not only for teachers and students in international history and political science, but also for general readers seeking an introduction to American diplomatic history. This collection of essays highlights a variety of newer, innovative, and stimulating conceptual approaches and analytical methods used to study the history of American foreign relations, including bureaucratic, dependency, and world systems theories, corporatist and national security models, psychology, culture, and ideology. Along with substantially revised essays from the first edition, this volume presents entirely new material on postcolonial theory, borderlands history, modernization theory, gender, race, memory, cultural transfer, and critical theory. The book seeks to define the study of American international history, stimulate research in fresh directions, and encourage cross-disciplinary thinking, especially between diplomatic history and other fields of American history, in an increasingly transnational, globalizing world.

history of us foreign policy: Vietnam, Korea and US Foreign Policy Christine Bragg, 2005

Written for the Edexcel specification, this in-depth A2 study looks at the US relationship with South East Asia in the context of the Cold War. Emphasis is placed on the roles of Johnson and Nixon which are both heavily covered in the exams and assignments. contains thorough and up-to-date exam preparation, including practice questions, advice on what makes a good answer and help for students on how to interpret the questions and plan essays. is written by an expert author team who have a wide experience of teaching and examining A-level History and focus on exactly what students need to know and how to prepare for the exam.

history of us foreign policy: A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations Christopher R. W.

Dietrich, 2020-03-04 Covers the entire range of the history of U.S. foreign relations from the colonial period to the beginning of the 21st century. *A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations* is an authoritative guide to past and present scholarship on the history of American diplomacy and foreign relations from its seventeenth century origins to the modern day. This two-volume reference work presents a collection of historiographical essays by prominent scholars. The essays explore three centuries of America's global interactions and the ways U.S. foreign policies have been analyzed and interpreted over time. Scholars offer fresh perspectives on the history of U.S. foreign relations; analyze the causes, influences, and consequences of major foreign policy decisions; and address contemporary debates surrounding the practice of American power. The Companion covers a wide variety of methodologies, integrating political, military, economic, social and cultural history to explore the ideas and events that shaped U.S. diplomacy and foreign relations and continue to influence national identity. The essays discuss topics such as the links between U.S. foreign relations and the study of ideology, race, gender, and religion; Native American history, expansion, and imperialism; industrialization and modernization; domestic and international politics; and the United States' role in decolonization, globalization, and the Cold War. A comprehensive approach to understanding the history, influences, and drivers of U.S. foreign relation, this indispensable resource: Examines significant foreign policy events and their subsequent interpretations Places key figures and policies in their historical, national, and international contexts Provides background on recent and current debates in U.S. foreign policy Explores the historiography and primary sources for each topic Covers the development of diverse themes and methodologies in histories of U.S. foreign policy Offering scholars, teachers, and students unmatched chronological breadth and analytical depth, *A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations: Colonial Era to the Present* is an important contribution to scholarship on the history of America's interactions with the world.

history of us foreign policy: The History of American Foreign Policy from 1895 Jerald A.

Combs, Jessica Elkind, 2024-04-01 Now in its fifth edition, this volume offers a clear, concise, and nuanced history of U.S. foreign relations since the Spanish-American War and places that narrative within the context of the most influential historiographical trends and debates. *The History of*

American Foreign Policy from 1895 includes both revised and new sections that incorporate insights from recent scholarship on the United States in the world. These sections devote more attention to the international framework as well as the domestic constraints under which American foreign policymakers operated. This edition also emphasizes the role of non-state actors such as missionaries, aid workers, activists, and business leaders in shaping policies and contributing to international relations. As a result, the text considers a broader and more diverse range of people and voices than many other histories of U.S. foreign policy. Expanded final chapters bring the story of U.S. foreign relations to the present and explore some of the contemporary challenges facing American and global leaders, including terrorism, the effects of climate change, China's increasing influence, and globalization. Updated controversial issues sections and suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter reflect important contributions from new studies. This engaging text is an invaluable resource for students interested in the history of American foreign policy and international relations.

history of us foreign policy: Guide to U.S. Foreign Policy Robert J. McMahon, Thomas W. Zeiler, 2012-08-22 At no time in American history has an understanding of the role and the art of diplomacy in international relations been more essential than it is today. Both the history of U.S. diplomatic relations and the current U.S. foreign policy in the twenty-first century are major topics of study and interest across the nation and around the world. Spanning the entire history of American diplomacy—from the First Continental Congress to the war on terrorism to the foreign policy goals of the twenty-first century—Guide to U.S. Foreign Policy traces not only the growth and development of diplomatic policies and traditions but also the shifts in public opinion that shape diplomatic trends. This comprehensive, two-volume reference shows how the United States gained “the strength of a giant” and also analyzes key world events that have determined the United States’ changing relations with other nations. The two volumes’ structure makes the key concepts and issues accessible to researchers: The set is broken up into seven parts that feature 40 topical and historical chapters in which expert writers cover the diplomatic initiatives of the United States from colonial times through the present day. Volume II’s appendix showcases an A-to-Z handbook of diplomatic terms and concepts, organizations, events, and issues in American foreign policy. The appendix also includes a master bibliography and a list of presidents; secretaries of state, war, and defense; and national security advisers and their terms of service. This unique reference highlights the changes in U.S. diplomatic policy as government administrations and world events influenced national decisions. Topics include imperialism, economic diplomacy, environmental diplomacy, foreign aid, wartime negotiations, presidential influence, NATO and its role in the twenty-first century, and the response to terrorism. Additional featured topics include the influence of the American two-party system, the impact of U.S. elections, and the role of the United States in international organizations. Guide to U.S. Foreign Policy is the first comprehensive reference work in this field that is both historical and thematic. This work is of immense value for researchers, students, and others studying foreign policy, international relations, and U.S. history. ABOUT THE EDITORS Robert J. McMahon is the Ralph D. Mershon Professor of History in the Mershon Center for International Security Studies at The Ohio State University. He is a leading historian of American diplomatic history and is author of several books on U.S. foreign relations. Thomas W. Zeiler is professor of history and international affairs at the University of Colorado at Boulder and is the executive editor of the journal *Diplomatic History*.

history of us foreign policy: US Foreign Policy in World History David Ryan, 2014-04-23 US Foreign Policy in World History is a survey of US foreign relations and its perceived crusade to spread liberty and democracy in the two hundred years since the American Revolution. David Ryan undertakes a systematic and material analysis of US foreign policy, whilst also explaining the policymakers' grand ideas, ideologies and constructs that have shaped US diplomacy. US Foreign Policy explores these arguments by taking a thematic approach structured around central episodes and ideas in the history of US foreign relations and policy making, including: * The Monroe Doctrine, its philosophical goals and impact * Imperialism and expansionism * Decolonization and

self-determination * the Cold War * Third World development * the Soviet 'evil empire', the Sandinistas and the 'rogue' regime of Saddam Hussein * the place of goal for economic integration within foreign affairs.

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A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy offers a conceptual and historical overview of American foreign relations from the founding to the present. Joyce Kaufman clearly explains major themes in foreign relations and places the evolution of policy decisions within the context of the international situations and domestic priorities.

history of us foreign policy: *The Routledge History of U.S. Foreign Relations* Tyson Reeder, 2021-12-29
The Routledge History of U.S. Foreign Relations provides a comprehensive view of U.S. diplomacy and foreign affairs from the founding to the present. With contributions from recognized experts from around the world, this volume unveils America's long and complicated history on the world stage. It presents the United States' evolution from a weak player, even a European pawn, to a global hegemonic leader over the course of two and a half centuries. The contributors offer an expansive vision of U.S. foreign relations—from U.S.-Native American diplomacy in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the post-9/11 war on terror. They shed new light on well-known events and suggest future paths of research, and they capture lesser-known episodes that invite reconsideration of common assumptions about America's place in the world. Bringing these discussions to a single forum, the book provides a strong reference source for scholars and students who seek to understand the broad themes and changing approaches to the field. This book will be of interest to students and scholars of U.S. history, political science, international relations, conflict resolution, and public policy, amongst other areas.

history of us foreign policy: *America in the World* Frank Costigliola, Michael J. Hogan, 2013-12-23
This volume includes historiographical surveys of American foreign relations since 1941 by some of the country's leading historians. Some of the essays offer sweeping overviews of the major trends in the field of foreign/international relations history. Others survey the literature on US relations with particular regions of the world or on the foreign policies of presidential administrations. The result is a comprehensive assessment of the historical literature on US foreign policy that highlights recent developments in the field.

history of us foreign policy: From Colony to Superpower George C. Herring, 2008-10-28
The Oxford History of the United States is the most respected multi-volume history of our nation in print. The series includes three Pulitzer Prize-winners, a New York Times bestseller, and winners of prestigious Bancroft and Parkman Prizes. From Colony to Superpower is the only thematic volume commissioned for the series. Here George C. Herring uses foreign relations as the lens through which to tell the story of America's dramatic rise from thirteen disparate colonies huddled along the Atlantic coast to the world's greatest superpower. A sweeping account of United States' foreign relations and diplomacy, this magisterial volume documents America's interaction with other peoples and nations of the world. Herring tells a story of stunning successes and sometimes tragic failures, captured in a fast-paced narrative that illuminates the central importance of foreign relations to the existence and survival of the nation, and highlights its ongoing impact on the lives of ordinary citizens. He shows how policymakers defined American interests broadly to include territorial expansion, access to growing markets, and the spread of an American way of life. And Herring does all this in a story rich in human drama and filled with epic events. Statesmen such as Benjamin Franklin and Woodrow Wilson and Harry Truman and Dean Acheson played key roles in America's rise to world power. But America's expansion as a nation also owes much to the adventurers and explorers, the sea captains, merchants and captains of industry, the missionaries and diplomats, who discovered or charted new lands, developed new avenues of commerce, and established and defended the nation's interests in foreign lands. From the American Revolution to the fifty-year struggle with communism and conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, From Colony to Superpower tells the dramatic story of America's emergence as superpower—its birth in revolution, its troubled present, and its uncertain future.

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history of us foreign policy: America's Failing Empire Warren I. Cohen, 2008-04-15 This sharp and authoritative account of American foreign relations analyzes the last fifteen years of foreign policy in relation to the last forty years, since the end of the Cold War. Provides an overview and understanding of the recent history of U.S. foreign relations from the viewpoint of one of the most respected authorities in the field Includes suggestions for further reading.

history of us foreign policy: Principled Diplomacy Cathal J. Nolan, 1993-01-30 This new analysis of governing ideas in U.S. foreign policy shows how they arise, are sustained and challenged both domestically and internationally, and become part of the world order. Nolan assesses the problems of reconciling concerns for individual rights and liberal principles with national security interests in U.S. foreign policy over the course of the twentieth century. This interpretive survey redefines the key components in the make-up of U.S. diplomacy and provides good reading for students of American government, international relations and U.S. foreign policy, American and world history, defense, and human rights policy. This short history traces the notions that liberty is indivisible and that security depends ultimately on the establishment and success of liberal-democratic norms between and within states. It shows how U.S. policy vacillates between giving active or passive expression to these ideas, always relying on a basic assumption about the presumed pacific character of democracy. Utilizing a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, it looks at how these ideas became manifest in two major policy settings---those affecting the Soviet Union and the UN. Through these case studies, the book shows how these ideas become progressively embedded in U.S. policy; how they have been challenged by different interests and events; how they were disseminated among and accepted by allies (and even several former adversaries); and how, as a result, they now permeate the structures of major international organizations, and even underlie the emerging post-Cold War international system as a whole. The conclusion offers an interesting perspective for the future.

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