

America's S&T and Dynamics of Great Power Competition

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Courting Science: Securing the Foundation for a Second American Century (2016)



- Nature of Power in the 21st Century
- Question of American Decline
- Hegemony vs. Imperialism
- Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power
- Ikenberry vs. Layne on American Grand Strategy

Main Argument: The United States in Great Power competition conflates Science & Technology (S&T) at its own peril, reducing the prospect for a second American Century.

Key Supporting Claims

- Science is distinguishable from Technology.
- Distinction matters in terms of great power competition and cooperation.
 - Civic Constitution / Democracy and Science
 - International Diplomacy / Power Transitions
 - Transnational Issues / Globalization

Evidence: Single Case Studies Using Analytic Narrative

- U.S. S&T Policy – postwar to present – mobilizing democracy
- U.S. Hegemony and the Rise of the Rest – Unconsummated partnership between USA and Brazil
- U.S. Leadership and Global Governance at the Final Frontier – “primacy or world order”

Reasons Why the United States Could Fail

- Case 1: Polarization and Transactional Democracy; death of expertise; limits of bureaucratic organization under the Constitution
- Case 2: Less room, compared to U.S.-Brazil relations, to find zones of agreement with China / Russia / Iran
- Case 3: Thucydides' Trap vs. Hegemon's Dilemma; authority vs. legitimacy; short-term control vs. long-term capacity; relative power vs. global growth

Bridging the Gap: Recommendations for Policy

- Pay Attention to Theory. (Exemplars: U.S. Navy ONR, Eisenhower Legacy in Space, William Perry Legacy on Second Offset, Joint Staff SMA Weekly Reports and Senior Level Reviews*)
- Beware Technology Panaceas: Nuclear, Cyber, Space, Neuro/Bio. (Value of political-economy and policy-relevant knowledge)
- Invest Broadly in Scientific Leadership. (Distributed control, mission-oriented tithing, non-monetized commitment)

Suggested Reading:

- Grand Strategy – competitive cooperative balance
 - Beckley (2018); Allison (2017); Copeland (2014)
- Grand Strategy – offshore balancing vs. engagement
 - Walt (2018); Mearsheimer (2018); Hendrickson (2018); Posen (2014);
 - Brands (2019, 2018); w/Feaver (*Survival and FA*); Kagan (2018); Mearsheimer(2018)
- Nuclear – strategic stability under resurgent great power competition
 - Colby (*National Interest and FA*); Kroenig (2018); Roberts (2016)
- Technology (general) and International Leadership
 - Davis (2018, 2014); Taylor (2016); Wu (2015); Horowitz (2014); Ferguson (2011)