economic interdependence, the study would have benefited from a systematic discussion of how differences in political systems shape the reactions and relative influence of citizens concerning the prospects for building economic bonds with a former enemy.

Given a shared focus on the challenges associated with strengthening peace in postwar states, there are a number of common themes that emerge within these studies. First, each of these works is cautious about how to characterize the concept of peace in the postwar environment. Both Berdal's book and the edited volume highlight the fact that it is rarely the case that an end to civil war brings a definitive conclusion to violence within a country. Instead, postwar states often experience a continuation of high rates of bloodshed linked to such phenomena as revenge killings, criminal activity, and a culture habituated to acts of brutality. In the case of post–civil war Guatemala, Berdal (p. 49) cites statistics noting that 10 years after the war had ended, there was "a 'peacetime' rate of extra-judicial killings higher than at any time during the war."

Press-Barnathan also addresses the challenges inherent in defining the concept of peace as she considers the resolution of interstate conflicts. Drawing on the work of others, she is careful to distinguish between two stages of peace. She identifies an initial stage of "cold" peace in which combatants sign an agreement but continue to view one another with hostility and suspicion; this contrast with a second potential stage of "warm" peace in which former enemies are confident that conflict will not reemerge.

A second common theme that emerges within these studies is a strong skepticism about the possibility of identifying a key set of prescriptions that might serve as a formula for peacebuilding success within societies emerging from conflict. Each work offers the perspective that states are necessarily different from one another based on their historical and cultural circumstances. These differences must be taken into account when considering appropriate and effective strategies of intervention.

Given the doubts articulated about identifying a common formula for peacebuilding, all of these studies eschew the use of a quantitative methodology for testing the effectiveness of particular strategies of intervention. Berdal (p. 20) is the most outspoken in his criticism of quantitative research concerning peacebuilding, arguing that these studies tend to "dehistoricise and depoliticise" the process in such a way as to limit important insights. In a similar vein, Press-Barnathan argues that a quantitative approach would prove inappropriate for an analysis of the means through which states deepen their economic cooperation in the aftermath of war. She instead favors structured case studies that allow for a consideration of both context and process.

A final theme that is common to the books considered in this review is a sense that any efforts to strengthen peace within a country emerging from conflict will require multiple forms of intervention. While each study highlights a particular aspect of third-party influence, they all recognize that addressing the various challenges confronting a postwar state will require that multiple strategies of assistance take place simultaneously. This is best represented in the Bowden, Charlesworth, and Farrall edited volume in which there is a discussion of the importance of weaving together a network of both actors and strategies supportive of an emerging peace.

These three books collectively demonstrate a growing concern among both academics and policymakers about addressing the challenges associated with strengthening peace in states emerging from conflict. They highlight for readers different mechanisms that are available to third-party actors as they seek to shift a society's focus away from violence and toward peace and reconciliation.

Follies of Power: America's Unipolar Fantasy. By David Calleo. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 188p. $31.00 paper.

America's Global Advantage: U.S. Hegemony and International Cooperation. By Carla Norrlof. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 292p. $85.00 cloth, $33.00 paper.
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— Christopher Layne, *Texas A&M University*

During the 1980s, writers such as Paul Kennedy, Robert Gilpin, David Calleo, James Chace, and Walter Lippmann argued that the United States was experiencing relative decline. This debate ended abruptly, however, when in quick succession America's leading geopolitical and economic rival—the Soviet Union and Japan, respectively—suffered catastrophic misfortunes. The Soviet Union disintegrated, and Japan's economic bubble burst—an economic reversal from which it has yet to recover despite the passage of nearly two decades. Premonitions of decline quickly gave way to the celebration of U.S. hegemony in a unipolar world.

Until quite recently, it has been commonplace for books and articles on U.S. foreign policy to observe that since the Cold War's end, the United States has been the most powerful actor in the international system since Rome at its imperial zenith. Because of the Great Recession and China's astonishingly rapid great power rise, however, during the past three years the tenor of the foreign policy debate in the United States has begun to change. The issue of American decline is back on center stage. The two books reviewed herein offer very different answers to the questions of whether the United States is in relative decline or American hegemony will endure. In *Follies of Power,* Calleo argues that a grand strategy that aims at perpetuating unipolarity and American hegemony is both unsound and unsustainable. In contrast, in *America's Global Advantage,* Carla Norrlof argues (p. xi) that "the United States benefits from being the most dominant power today [and] it will continue to be the greatest power for the foreseeable future."

Calleo has written incisively on many topics, including American foreign policy, U.S.-European relations, U.S. economic policy, and international political economy. A slim volume, *Follies of Power* is not really a "scholarly" book. Rather, it is more a cri de coeur warning that the pursuit of hegemony has put the United States on a dangerous path both geopolitically and economically. The book is written with Calleo's customary elegance and erudition, and, as the dense notes at the end of each chapter attest, his arguments reflect his extensive research. Norrlof's *America's Global Advantage* is a traditional scholarly work. It is extensively researched, well argued, and—while complete with the game-theoretic and rational choice methodologies of which many international political economy scholars are enamored—Norrlof's clear writing makes her case accessible even to nonspecialists. Given space constraints, this review, rather than describing the authors' respective arguments in detail, will cut to the chase and focus on the key points where they engage each other.

Calleo's verdict (p. 13) on America's unipolar grand strategy is harsh: "[T]his past decade has seen a precipitous decline in American power. Our military is bogged down, our economy is in a shambles; the legitimacy of our leadership could scarcely be lower." Calleo—himself a major contributor to the earlier debate about American decline (*The Imperious Economy,* 1982; *The Bankrupting of America: How the Federal Budget Is Impoverishing the Nation,* 1993)—says (p. 98) that what he calls American declinism was only "slumbering" from the early 1990s until the onset of the Great Recession in Fall 2007.

Calleo's argument about the causes of U.S. decline is succinct. The United States—as its persistent current account and federal budget deficits attest—is living beyond its means. To support its military adventures, domestic consumption, and government expenditures, it depends on foreign capital inflows. Recently, however, private foreign direct investment is being displaced by purchases of Treasury bills by foreign central banks, especially China's. In other words, instead of enhancing America's economic productivity, foreign capital inflows now are used to pay for U.S. profligacy. Yet over the course of the decade, the dollar has lost value, raising the question of how long the United States can rely on foreign capital inflows to finance its budget and current account deficits.

The United States, of course, has faced periodic dollar crises since the 1960s and always has found a way to surmount them. However, during the Cold War, U.S. allies like Germany and Japan were willing to finance America's debts because the United States defended them from the Soviet Union. Today, Europe no longer depends on the United States for its security and, moreover, the Euro has emerged as an alternative to the dollar. As Calleo says (p. 102), "The Euro's very existence . . . challenges the dollar's primacy." While inertia may sustain the dollar's reserve currency role for now, at some point in the foreseeable future, he says (p. 102), "The dollar's global position seems ripe for a great fall." While Europe may be ambivalent about staging a full-bore attack on the dollar's reserve currency role, a fast-growing China poses a real threat to the dollar's value. China's growth is linked to American debt-fueled consumption, now largely financed by China itself. However, should China ultimately decide to build up its own domestic consumption and investment by allowing the dollar to slide in value (or the renminbi to rise, which is the same thing), Calleo (p. 104) predicts a sharp drop in U.S. living standards. Interest rates will have to rise to stabilize the dollar, Americans will pay more to borrow, and economic growth will be slowed. Moreover, there will be big geopolitical consequences because America's globe-straddling military power will become prohibitively costly. As he says (pp. 104–5), "The assumption of unlimited resources, implanted in the unipolar vision, will be difficult to sustain. In short, market forces will no longer conspire to finance America's unipolar role."

Norrlof rejects declinist arguments like Calleo's and claims (p. 2) that "American hegemony is stable and sustainable." Her case is complex and it is hard to do it full justice in a short review. Distilled to its essence, her argument—which seems counterintuitive—is that America's persistent, current account deficit is (p. 95) "strategic" and thus, contra Calleo, is actually a source of strength, not weakness. She contends that the United States will remain dominant because other states have a strong interest in propping up American hegemony. Here, she says (p. 17), that up to a point, some relative decline in U.S. power actually is good for American hegemony because it reinforces the incentives of states that benefit from U.S. primacy to bolster the United States.

Norrlof's argument rests on three basic points. First, the U.S. market is the world's largest; hence, other states want—and need—access to this market for their products. This means that other states have strong incentives to finance American consumption, that the United States can use access to its market as leverage to get its way on trade liberalization and other issues in international institutions, and that other states will act to strengthen the dollar whenever it declines too steeply in value. Second, the dollar is the international system's reserve currency. So long as this remains true, other states will finance U.S. deficits and prevent the dollar's excessive weakening. Third, because other states benefit from the American security umbrella, they are willing to loan the United States money and hold dollars—in essence, they pay a "security tax" to the United States. Instead of being primacy-weakening imperial overstretch, U.S. military commitments abroad bolster American commercial and financial dominance.

In contrast to Calleo, Norrlof believes that neither the European Union nor China will be able to dethrone America's preeminence or that of the dollar.

Weighing the competing arguments advanced in these two books about the future of U.S. hegemony, Calleo has the better of it. His argument works much better as an explanation of the past—U.S. dominance from 1945 to 2007—than as predictor of the future. The Great Recession and the rise of China have eroded the foundations of American power. Although she believes it unlikely, even Norrlof admits (pp. 53–54, 135–36) that a variety of factors could conspire to undermine U.S. hegemony: a loss of soft power, a weakening of U.S. military dominance, the fear of runaway inflation in the United States, and a corresponding sharp depreciation of the dollar.

Rather than hypothetical events that could happen in a distant future, some of these things are occurring now, and others are likely to happen relatively soon. First, the Great Recession has shattered American soft power, and in many parts of the world the Beijing Consensus on political and economic development has replaced the Washington Consensus (Stefan A. Halper, *The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century,* 2010; Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World,* 2007; Kishore Mahbubani, *The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East,* 2008).

Second, in important respects, the United States already is incapable of acting as the world's economic hegemon. At the April 2009 G20 Summit in London, President Barack Obama acknowledged that the United States no longer is able to be the world's consumer of last resort, and that the world increasingly is looking to China (and India and other emerging market states) to be the locomotives of global recovery (quoted in David E. Sanger and Mark Landler, "In Europe, Obama Faces Calls for Rules on Finances," *New York Times,* 1 April 2009). Moreover, within a decade of so, China, not the United States, will be the world's largest market. The "currency wars" that broke out in Fall 2010 demonstrated that the United States is no longer the financial hegemon, either.

Finally, looking a decade or so into the future, the dollar's reserve currency status is threatened both by America's gathering fiscal crisis and by China's step-by-step internationalization of the renminbi. (On the dollar's future, see National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends, 2025,* 2008; Eric Helleiner and Jonathan Kirshner, *The Future of the Dollar,* 2009). And, as many observers, including both Calleo and Norrlof, understand, if the dollar loses reserve currency status, the era of American hegemony is over for sure.

Norrlof joins the ranks of scholars who have predicted—for various reasons—that U.S. hegemony will last far into the future. However, recent events suggest two things. First, the declinists of the 1980s were right. The Great Recession is the culmination of the termite decline that they predicted would gradually erode the foundations of U.S. supremacy. Second, those who predicted the failure of America's unipolar strategy also have been vindicated (Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security* 17 [Spring 1993]: 5–51; Kenneth Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics, *International Security* [Fall 1994]: 44–79). The debates about unipolar stability and American hegemony are effectively over. The Pax America is drawing to a close and, driven by the rise of China and others, is giving way to a period of hegemonic transition. It remains to be seen whether the United States can make the strategic adjustment from an era of dominance to one of retrenchment.

The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order. By David Ekbladh. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. 404p. $35.00.

Secular Missionaries: Americans and African Development in the 1960s. By Larry Grubbs. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010. 256p. $34.95.

Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire and the Globalization of the New South. By Andrew Zimmerman. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. 416p. $35.00.
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— Nick Cullather, *Indiana University*

Gregg Mortenson built his first school in Korphe, Pakistan, in 2004. Today, two best-sellers, a hit record, Nobel prize nomination, and a criminal investigation later, his organization Pennies for Peace claims to have built more than three hundred schools. Its Website hails him as a hero, admired by American commanders and Taliban warlords alike. Schools, he says, strike directly at the poverty, ignorance, and hatred that "cause war, terrorism, everything."

Mortenson hit on a parable as fresh and seductive today as it was when Booker T. Washington built his cotton school in Togo in 1906. It has the shape—if a story can be said to have a shape—of an hourglass. Large aspirations are funneled into a single object, in this case a school. The device is small and simple but capable of releasing a cascade of idealized outcomes: material abundance, reconciliation, and peaceful change. We call this process development.

It may seem a poor way of understanding the world, but this kind of reductionism has enormous political value. Developmental fables are a defense against the stark complexity of social evolution. They fill a yawning gap in comprehension separating the United States and fellow "donor nations" from the realities of the Panjshir Valley, Darfur, or the thousands of other struggling communities they wish to transform. We can gauge their value by their