



America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy

Francis Fukuyama

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy

Francis Fukuyama

America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy Francis Fukuyama
Francis Fukuyama's criticism of the Iraq war put him at odds with neoconservative friends both within and outside the Bush administration. Here he explains how, in its decision to invade Iraq, the Bush administration failed in its stewardship of American foreign policy. First, the administration wrongly made preventive war the central tenet of its foreign policy. In addition, it badly misjudged the global reaction to its exercise of "benevolent hegemony." And finally, it failed to appreciate the difficulties involved in large-scale social engineering, grossly underestimating the difficulties involved in establishing a successful democratic government in Iraq.

Fukuyama explores the contention by the Bush administration's critics that it had a neoconservative agenda that dictated its foreign policy during the president's first term. Providing a fascinating history of the varied strands of neoconservative thought since the 1930s, Fukuyama argues that the movement's legacy is a complex one that can be interpreted quite differently than it was after the end of the Cold War. Analyzing the Bush administration's miscalculations in responding to the post-September 11 challenge, Fukuyama proposes a new approach to American foreign policy through which such mistakes might be turned around—one in which the positive aspects of the neoconservative legacy are joined with a more realistic view of the way American power can be used around the world.

America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy Details

Date : Published 2007 by Yale University Press (first published 2006)

ISBN : 9780300122534

Author : Francis Fukuyama

Format : Paperback 264 pages

Genre : Politics, Nonfiction, History, Political Science, International Relations

 [Download America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Ne ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy Francis Fukuyama

From Reader Review America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy for online ebook

Phil says

Fukuyama has 3 good ideas for books, but this less than 200 page adaptation of a lecture series failed to live up to the author's ability. His summary of "neoconservatism", and the 2nd Bush administration's arrogant abandonment of the doctrine effectively allows Fukuyama to illustrate different strains within the same movement and distance himself from people like Paul "Iraq will finance its own reconstruction" Wolfowitz. He skims through development (both political and economic), finishing by slamming together a discussion of multi-multilateralism as a possible way forward in American foreign policy. One of his core points, that a national "regime" is more than just the figurehead but rather encompasses a societal attitude, makes a lot of sense both in context of the 2003 Iraq intervention and for those who hope to see a brighter future in the Arab World with the removal of leaders such as Mubarak and Ben Ali.

Bookmarks Magazine says

Francis Fukuyama has often been more poised and clinical than his neoconservative contemporaries (including William Kristol and Paul Wolfowitz). Perhaps this makes his backflip away from mainline neocon thought understandable, but it doesn't make it any more forgivable. Many reviewers censure the Johns Hopkins University professor for not providing a personal defense of his defection. All the political lather threatens to obscure the actual book, which contains a concise history of neoconservative thought and a thoughtful, if not totally new, proposal for more peaceful (or "soft power") means of nation building. That might give heart to liberals, but his colleagues feel he has abandoned the convictions of his 1992 book, *The End of History and the Last Man*, and committed the ultimate political sin: swapping horses at midterm.

This is an excerpt from a review published in Bookmarks magazine.

Jeff says

The first part of the book which is basically a history of neoconservatism by someone who knows what he's talking about (as opposed to 80% of the people who drop the term in conversation). Fukuyama's history of the neocons is excellent and highly recommended. The second part of the book describes the direction Fukuyama would have American foreign policy take. It can be summed up in one word: Kerry-esque.

Nehal Abdurhaman says

?????? ????? ?? ????? 11 ?????? , ? ????? ??? ?? ??????? ????? ???????

????? ??? ????? ?? ??? ??????
??????? ?????????? ?????????? ??? ??? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ? ?????? ?? ??? ??????

Mark Maguire says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and welcomed the clarification over the Author's previous "End of History and the Last Man" validation of the omnipotence of Liberal Democracy and Capitalist economy.

The book was written as a counterpoint to the "Bush Doctrine" or pre-emptive war; the "War on Terror", and the circumnavigation of International institutions in favour of the construction of the fabled "Coalition of the Willing". The Author argues that the imposition of the Patriot Act; the rhetorical war against Al-Qaeda, and the elevation of the hunt for Bin Laden to a comparable "war against Islam" have served only to de-stabilise and alienate, compromising US relations throughout the World, fostering distrust and undermining the vision of American Freedom as a viable model for aspirant nations, particularly in the wake of the illegal Iraq War. In essence, the A-political Last Man whom triumphed over the "Evil Empire" in the former Eastern bloc, has been hoist by his own pertard.

The Author argues for the adoption of "realistic Wilsonianism" which seeks to create "overlapping institutions" within the international political circuit which would negate the need for the Neo-Conservative World View and doctrine of "Pre-emptive" war by resolving the imperfections within institutions such as the UN and NATO.

This is a recommended read for anyone whom wishes to gain an inside view of the Neo-Conservative doctrine and how it's administration has created an inherently poisonus and short-termist view, based upon pre-supposed American moral superiority versus the rest.

Ty says

having read the previous book by this author, "The End of History and the Last Man", i was eager to see what he was up to now. this book is an insider's look at the neoconservative movement, which the author claimed allegiance to until recently, along with an analysis of where the White House neocon's went wrong on Iraq. the author then proposes a potential new style of foreign policy for the future of the US.

i would have give this book 5 stars, but it was obviously extended from an academic paper, so in places it is very difficult to read and in others it is quite repetitious. i found the analysis and ideas fascinating and i hope that the next president whoever it is takes the time to learn about this book.

Bibliomantic says

Reading this text I got the impression that Francis Fukuyama is a very serious man. I cannot imagine him laughing. Perhaps I'm wrong, and Mr. Fukuyama is fun to be around, but in this book at least he comes across as someone who sees some serious problems and has not time for humor or irony. Well, he does employ irony from time to time, but it's with the flair of a mortician, or perhaps a copy editor.

With that in mind, Fukuyama does indeed tackle some very serious issues, and does so very capably, ranging from hardcore theory to its practical manifestations, as well as reality on the ground and what we can practically expect as outcomes or potential solutions. Fukuyama is comfortable on both sides of the theory-praxis divide, and that I think makes it possible for him to merge two seemingly contentious positions, realism and Wilsonianism. In street language, he wants to merge the hardcore Kissinger-style approach of dealing with power relations vis-à-vis states with the Wilsonian approach of actually caring how those states are structured. Further, he wants to do this via, what he terms, multi-multilateralism. On the way there, Fukuyama goes over the long history of the neocon phenomenon (no, it did not start with Cheney) and rather intelligently jabs at the Bush administration's legacy. He also offers some fresh approaches to the understanding of Islamic extremism. He does not see it as a Huntington's large scale clash of civilizations, but rather as a smaller version of same that occurs within alienated emigrant communities. He sees them as channeling their angst into epistemes of very much Western rather than exclusively Middle Eastern origin. In this Fukuyama is partly inspired by the work of the great Oliver Roy, who has written extensively on the subject. Fukuyama also very rationally analyzes recent and current conflicts and international issues, and he often reframes events in a way that seems to imply that there are certain things that flew over the heads of other analysts, not to mention those running our government (past and present). He finishes by offering his own prescriptions for managing geopolitical order and disorder with a strong but more cooperative US foreign policy. Although I think that aspects of the approach he suggests would be difficult to sustain from one administration to another, I remain impressed.

George Hodgson says

This is a very well written book. It goes into a detailed explanation of the failure of the Iraq invasion particularly its failure to achieve any of the goals set out prior to the event. It also is prescient in its discussion around how this has negatively affected the world particularly the middle east lack of tolerance for US intervention. It would be interesting to have a new conclusion in view of ISIS today. An interesting analysis of the two main types of neoconservatives is compelling.

John says

Why read "America at the Crossroads" eight years later? Before answering, let me say that this book was written in 2006 and largely probes the foreign policy of the first George W. Bush administration, and how the Iraq war will forever cast the term 'neoconservative' in a particular light.

This book marks a transition in Francis Fukuyama, who one indirectly gets the picture of dealing with a lot of cognitive dissonance with soon-to-be-former ideological friends, from a political philosopher and policy analyst primarily aimed with explaining a Hegelian unfolding of world history to democracy ("End of History") to a policy practitioner aware of the full historical difficulty of institution building and the multi-

millennium impacts of culture on the kinds of achievable political society ("Origins of Political Order").

The distinction called out in this volume is that trust in democracy and a skepticism of international projects is better when it is not interpreted that cultures will automatically build democracies for themselves and that international institutions are untrustworthy dilutions of the will of a democratic state, but instead that our democratic peers are wise council and that international institution building is a careful continual attention and tuning to the unintended consequences of aid and development.

This leads me to why one might still consider reading this book, and that is because the problems are still with us and the advice about development and institution building still seems in the kind of spirit we might like to develop. Any challenge worth having is ongoing or chronic: maintaining friendships, businesses, communities, homes, international relations, a natural environment, and so on, but there are also chronic situations that aren't necessarily worthwhile, but where we've gotten ourselves by our actions and how we continue to cope with them defines our character. At the time of writing, the Iraq war is over, but the development of institutions still sees chronic problems. Even heartening transitions, like that of the Ukraine, have not proven to be uncomplicated.

What was it like to live with the fear that rouge states would provide nuclear or biological weapons to extremist groups with demonstrated capabilities to make terrible attacks? It feels the same, as the problem is still with us, whether moderated or exacerbated being well beyond my ability to estimate. What was it like to live when the dominant thrust of United States international policy was reacting to this situation? What it was not was a new permanent order, even if it felt like it, as developing relationships never stops. This book takes us to that truth showing itself at that time.

???? says

This book was written in the wake of the failure in Iraq hence it had a major influence on the writer. apparently he declared that the neocons' policy had to be toppled down , and the new American foreign policy ought to be more dependent on soft power and hidden sovereignty and hegemony .. no more Americans' iron fist !

A book like that , in 2006 , is like a rational promotion for the democrats , especially Obama's new open minded policy , to be the new POTUS!

Doug says

I like the analysis on what neoconservatism is, how the Bush administration veered away from some of its core principles, and some the mistakes they made along the way, but his solution is pretty much comes straight out of After Victory: Order and Power in International Politics, so just read that.

Chris says

Steven Peterson says

Chapter 7 begins with these words: "It seems very doubtful at this juncture that history will judge the Iraq war kindly." Such words from one of the more impressive conservative voices in the United States, Francis Fukuyama, make this an important work.

Nonetheless, this is a powerful volume--and it builds on a slender work that is a genuine contribution in the debate over democratic nation building--his 2004 volume, *State-Building*. Indeed, these two works should probably be considered together.

The former lays out the prerequisites for any effort at democratic nation-building. It is a hard-headed work that complements a large literature--and is one that neocons in the Bush administration should have taken seriously.

This work attempts to show how the neoconservatives "lost their way." Fukuyama, once a player in this movement, reflected upon where the movement was going and has concluded that it has taken a wrong turn. Other reviewers accuse him of apostasy, opportunism, and so on. But this is a work from a leading intellectual that must be confronted and taken seriously. It will be interesting to revisit his observations a few years from now, when the destiny of Iraq is clearer.
