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U.S. Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power

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National Security Issue,” and “Operational Law,” Moore and Turner have deleted material that was more relevant to the Cold War. Additionally, many other chapters have been revised and updated to reflect important advances in national security law and policy.

Perhaps what sets this casebook apart from others in the genre is its extensive scope. Its thirty-two chapters cover not only “some of the central public preoccupations of our time—military force, arms control, free speech, and terrorism—but also a number of more esoteric corners of the law,” which at times have gained wide attention and scrutiny. Indeed, every conceivable aspect of national security law and policy, from “The Use of Force in International Relations: Norms Concerning the Initiation of Coercion” to “War Crimes and Tribunals” to “The Control of International Terrorism” and “Immigration Law and National Security,” is included.

The second edition of National Security Law sets the standard in its field and will no doubt facilitate “an interdisciplinary understanding” of what Moore and Turner “believe to be one of the most important public policy developments now facing the nation.” Without question, Moore and Turner have succeeded in producing a comprehensive, well organized, extremely well written casebook filled with seminal cases, insightful commentary, and stimulating questions for discussion. National Security Law is likely to rapidly become a staple at law schools and advanced degree programs across America and will no doubt be relied on by scholars, students, and practitioners for years to come.

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Steven Hook’s textbook of American foreign policy offers a sweeping array of issues that put contemporary American politics in clearer perspective. The preface lays out this paradox: the very sources of American strength have increasingly become sources of vulnerability, among them a sclerotic bureaucracy that cannot “effectively manage the dynamic world order that, to a considerable extent, is of its own making.” For Hook, the United States is threatened by forces such as globalization, which it so vigorously promoted and which gave it strength. This work explores the impact of this paradox on the process of making U.S. foreign policy.

The book examines the setting of U.S. foreign policy, touching on the rise of American power and on various views and theories of how decisions are made. It then explores the governmental sources of foreign policy, including the various branches of government and the bureaucracy, and nongovernmental sources of foreign policy, such as public opinion, interest groups, and intergovernmental organizations. Finally, it examines policy, including defense and economic statecraft, and transnational problems such as population growth, global warming, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The result for the reader is a good understanding of contemporary American foreign policy.

Hook offers interesting point-counterpoint debates on subjects ranging from the realist-liberal debate on war to nuclear deterrence versus just war. There
are also sections in which such figures as Fidel Castro, Ted Koppel, and Theodore Roosevelt speak in their own words, as well as many useful graphs and tables that clearly illustrate important developments in world politics. The extensive glossary should prove very helpful.

No book, alas, is without its shortfalls, and I offer two. First, Hook works with a theme; he puts forth an argument about the current state of American affairs and shapes his textbook around it. It is an interesting theme and a good tool for learning, but because textbooks are often devoid of editorial comment, in this one argument may pass as fact. Overall, the approach is effective, but teachers will need to emphasize to their students that the book is thematic.

Second, the scholarship needs updating in certain sections—for instance, in the discussion of cognitive psychology and decision making. It is true that much of the important literature in this area is dated, and that a book of this kind should not overwhelm the student. However, more could have been done to incorporate new work.

Overall, this is one of the best texts on American foreign policy. Hook, an associate professor of political science at Kent State University, has a strong record of publication on this subject and is a veteran textbook author. This work will be of interest not only to college students but also to members of the Naval War College community. While it is not yet clear that the United States is caught in a grand paradox the likes of which Hook addresses, it is certainly a vital, even defining, theme to consider, and one that he frames effectively. Certainly, it is an issue with which students, scholars, and policy makers will be grappling in the coming years.

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In March 2005 Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld released The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America. In the foreword Rumsfeld sends a clear message about America’s security concerns: “We live in a time of unconventional challenges and strategic uncertainty. We are confronting fundamentally different challenges from those faced by the American defense establishment in the Cold War and previous eras. The war on terrorism has exposed new challenges, but also unprecedented strategic opportunities to work at home and with allies and partners abroad to create conditions favorable to a secure international order.” Indeed, as witnessed by the summer terrorist bombings in London and earlier attacks in Madrid and Bali, countering these deadly “unconventional challenges” requires imaginative thinking and expert geopolitical knowledge. The Asian Security Handbook: Terrorism and the New Security Environment aims to assist in meeting these challenges in the Asian setting.

The Asian Security Handbook, strongly reflecting the post-9/11 environment, presents a series of political and security assessments of twenty-three Asian countries. True to its subtitle, the editors...