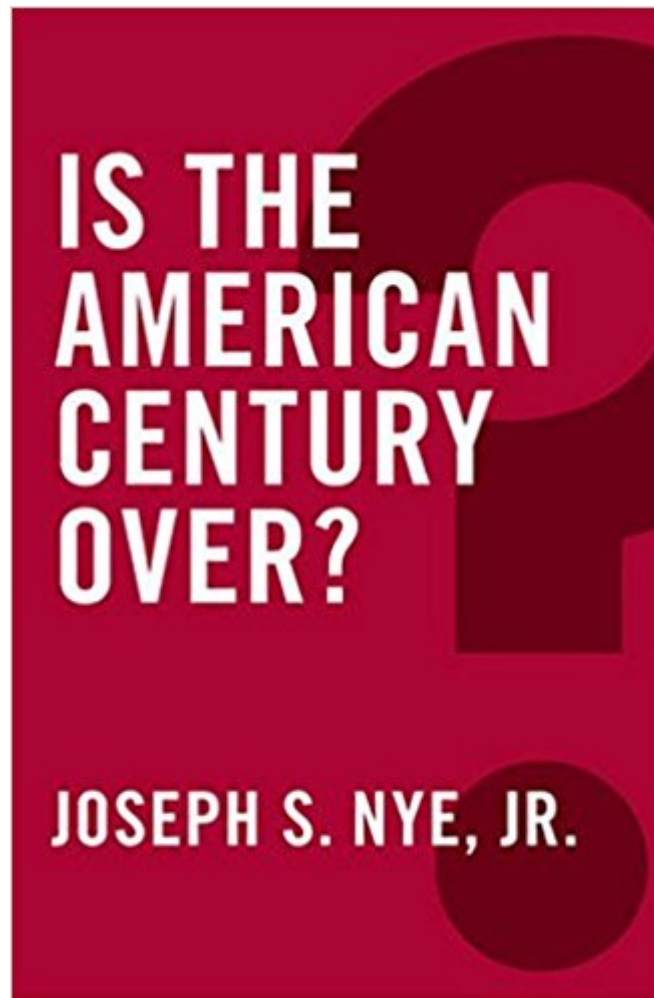




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# Is The American Century Over? (Global Futures)



## Synopsis

For more than a century, the United States has been the world's most powerful state. Now some analysts predict that China will soon take its place. Does this mean that we are living in a post-American world? Will China's rapid rise spark a new Cold War between the two titans? In this compelling essay, world renowned foreign policy analyst, Joseph Nye, explains why the American century is far from over and what the US must do to retain its lead in an era of increasingly diffuse power politics. America's superpower status may well be tempered by its own domestic problems and China's economic boom, he argues, but its military, economic and soft power capabilities will continue to outstrip those of its closest rivals for decades to come.

## Book Information

Series: Global Futures

Paperback: 152 pages

Publisher: Polity; 1 edition (January 20, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0745690076

ISBN-13: 978-0745690070

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.4 x 7.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 87 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #61,178 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > Trades & Tariffs](#) #114 in [Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Political Science > International Relations](#) #533 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > United States](#)

## Customer Reviews

2015 Best Book on Global Policy The World Policy Institute at Loyola Marymount University awarded "Is the American Century Over?" with its Best Book on Global Policy award for the year 2015.

"A professor at the Harvard Kennedy School and one of the most esteemed analysts of world affairs, Nye has been countering declinism for a quarter century, beginning with his 1990 book *Bound to Lead*. The brevity of his latest text belies its sweep, and judging by the reception it has received, even among those who are considerably less optimistic about America's prospects...one

suspects it will endure as a central text of the anti-declinst oeuvre." Ali Wyne, *American Interest* "In his clear, short, and closely reasoned book, Nye presents a far different view of American power, making some unfashionable but compelling arguments. Nye believes that the American century is far from over and that for the foreseeable future, the United States will retain a unique ability to shape global events." *Walter Russell Mead, Foreign Affairs* "Nye outlines each issue briskly, with economy and precision, creating an ideal primer for anyone wishing to better understand the global stage and where America stands on it." *LA Review of Books* "Nye does the great service of examining this claim in his new book, *Is the American Century Over?*, giving a subtle analysis in terms of hard power (military and economic) and soft power (a concept introduced by Nye to refer to an attractive practice, at least a model or ideals such as liberty or democracy)." *Huffington Post* *Is the American Century Over?* "is an excellent book that will help students of international affairs think carefully about the world and America's opportunities and challenges in the 21st century. It's brief, succinct and provocative." *The Washington Diplomat* "Academics and political junkies will probably breeze through *Is the American Century Over?* But the book is so well-written and accessible, general readers are likely to find it engaging and insightful as well. At its core, policy-oriented research and writing should strive to inform not just specialists or experts, but the public at large, making Nye's contribution to debates about America's purported decline that much more important." *Huffington Post* "This short, well-argued book offers a powerful rebuttal to America's premature obituarists." *The Economist* "A pioneer in the theory of soft power and the dean of American political scientists, Nye knows geopolitics. In his new book, *Is the American Century Over?*, Nye makes a strong case that American geopolitical superiority, far from being eclipsed, is still firmly in place and set to endure. And the biggest threat isn't China or India or Russia—it's America itself." *Time* "In this short, thoughtful book, Nye presents his case convincingly. It is a case that policy makers should ponder carefully." *Huffington Post* "The United States will likely remain the world's predominant power for many decades to come, Joe Nye concludes in his insightful new book. This welcome prediction is tempered by Nye's warning about key challenges that could yet lead to American decline, most notably, political dysfunction at home." *The Boston Globe* "US declinism can be overdone. In an excellent new essay asking *Is the American Century Over?* the Harvard scholar

Joseph Nye points up America's enduring strengths – economic, demographic and geographic as well as military. Financial Times "With his usual clarity and insight, Joe Nye gives us a fascinating analysis of the complexities of power, exploring hard and soft power, state and non-state actors, and how to retain leadership once domination is over. European readers have much to learn from the U.S. experience and its lessons for the evolution of the EU." Mario Monti, Prime Minister of Italy (2011) and President of Bocconi University "The future of American power is the great question of our century. No-one is better equipped than Joe Nye to answer it." Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, USAF (Ret.), former Presidential National Security Advisor "This calm, reflective, and thoughtful antidote to alarm about American decline displays Nye's astonishing capacity to engage with the full range of challenges to American leadership." Michael Ignatieff, Harvard Kennedy School "In this timely, compact book, Joe Nye makes a 'powerful' case for the continuation of American primacy through diplomacy and co-operation. This strategy would not be overstretch or retrenchment but instead the application of American Exceptionalism to shrewd power." Robert B. Zoellick, former President of the World Bank Group, US Trade Representative and US Deputy Secretary of State "The irreversibility of American decline is no longer a given. Joe Nye's compelling analysis shows that the future of the international order, and the respective roles of the US and China within it, will be shaped by a range of core domestic and foreign policy choices, rather than by some overwhelming, determinist, historical force that has somehow already decided the "natural" dimensions, depth and duration of American power. The history of nations, as Joe Nye rightly asserts, is a more dynamic process than that." Kevin Rudd, former Prime Minister of Australia "Joe Nye is always worth reading - objective without being aloof, insightful without lecturing. Our disordered world needs answers to the challenges posed here." David Miliband, UK Foreign Secretary 2007-2010 "Nye's masterful analysis shows the defenders of America's continued primacy how to make their most credible case while forcing the declinists to engage with its arguments, and even rethink their assumptions." Amitav Acharya, American University and author of *The End of American World Order* "In this tour de force Joe Nye proves that smart books about big ideas are best served in small packages: and if you are looking for one volume to read on a topic about which so much nonsense has been written since the disaster that was the Bush administration, this is the one to go for. Balanced, accessible, informed - but above all, wise - Nye demonstrates once more why he continues to influence the way we all think about the world." Michael Cox, LSE IDEAS "Joe Nye's clear-eyed analysis makes a very compelling case that the 'American

century' is far from over, even though with a less preponderant America and a more complex world, its next chapter will look different. It's not the sexiest argument. But utterly convincing." Wolfgang Ischinger, Chairman of the Munich Security Conference and former German Ambassador to the United States "Joe Nye's clear eyed assessments of America's place in the world have set the terms of the debate for more than a quarter century. This important book updates Nye's thinking and is an immensely valuable corrective to the pessimism and the complacency that are all too common in debates about America's future." Lawrence H. Summers, Harvard University "As Joseph S. Nye, Jr. brilliantly articulates, there are numerous challenges and challengers which will push the United States as the premier nation in the world over the next few decades. Bringing an objective, critical analysis and years of experience in economics and politics, Nye's *Is the American Century Over?* is both a cautionary tale for the patriotic and a celebration of emerging nations." Nomadic Press

Joseph S. Nye, Jr. is University Distinguished Service Professor and former dean of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government

Great wisdom in such a short book? So much for the belief that great scholars can't say much of value in less than 1,000 pages. This succinct measured essay on the contemporary role and station of the U.S. on the global stage has more measured wisdom per page than any short, recent book I can think of. Worth the price of purchase alone is the 'Further Reading' mini-chapter (pp. 128-133) at the end of this invaluable gem. Perfect for everyone, from all-knowing scholars, to just-learning students -- and even to semi-informed journalists, who don't have a lot of time for books that are much longer than they need be. Highly recommended by one of Harvard's most deserving star professors.

Thoughtful and -- get this! almost-uniquely among the cascade of such commentaries now overwhelming the Trump Era... -- also well-informed. Joe Nye is the doyen of international relations writers -- he taught most of them -- and, helpfully, he writes really well. But it is his information, and how he packages & presents it, which matters most: the comprehensive overview of the current mess -- international, geopolitical -- which all of us need now, as we wade through our too-many-medias, is easily & usefully accessible to us all in this small, flowing, well-annotated text. All decision-makers should read it -- and all of us who vote for them should too. Highly recommended!

A convincing argument that America's wealth resides as much ( if not more) in its civil society and entrepreneur class as it does with its Military and Economic Resources. Described as 'Soft Power' by Professor Joseph Nye, it is essential to any enlightened leadership by the United States and behooves policy-makers and citizens alike to assure its good health as well as its emanation overseas. Speaking as one of them, this articulation should be an obligatory companion for any Non Governmental Organization which seeks to represent America and countries with allied values abroad. Without such, America's leadership will fail.

This is one of the best of many works currently assessing the global balance of power between the U.S. and other major players. It also serves as an update on Nye's previous work which has done a great deal to dispel notions of American decline. In that respect alone it's a worthwhile antidote to decades of work comparing the U.S. to imperial declines seen in Rome and Great Britain. This is a very rich and well researched work, but I found his use of a three level chessboard as particularly useful analytically. On the top level he considers traditional strategic and military balances, on the second level he weighs economic changes and capabilities, and on the last level he looks at non state and transnational actors challenging traditional hierarchies. While he remarks on continuing American strengths, particularly in innovation and in the openness of the political and social systems he also recognizes the new role played by the growing BRICS. He focuses a good deal on social networks and interactions in assessing the governance of non-state actors. One minor criticism I would offer is that he should consider the interactions between the levels. An easy example is that economic and knowledge growth can allow an emerging state new options on the strategic level. Democratic and legitimate states can also prove more efficient in accessing social networks and interacting with non state actors. This book is important not only for its accurate assessments concerning the retained power by the West but also in its assessments of the power of emergent states. It's a must read for those of us trying to predict the future of the global system.

I give this book a 4/5 stars because while I enjoyed the book, I did not love it. I liked the topic Nye chose to write about, but the style of the book was a little strange to me. At times, it seemed like Nye was throwing all the information he has at the reader, making the book seem more overwhelming than it was. I found that this book was very informative, well thought out, but could use work on how the author chooses to present the information. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in global affairs, world politics, and world history. This book is a great read to

learn more about the future of our nation and the globe.

This book was conceived to answer a question on the future of US power at the aftermath of the bipolar world. Trying to devise which power pattern would substitute the previous one, Joseph Nye Jr, like Paul Kennedy, Robert Gilpin and Robert Keohane, among others, addresses this question, reinforces and expands the arguments he has set forth in his "Bound to lead". It seems that the key issue is the way you assess power and the way it is used in the international landscape throughout history. Apparently, from the Roman to the British Empire, power was mainly a zero-sum game, a notion related to the actual possession of land and its assets. The 20th Century was a Century where this notion underwent a change that was the result of the post-1945 institutional architecture, which requires cooperation and alliances to cope with its positive-sum logic. The question still remains though, if you think that to maintain this power position you must translate power into effective policies and strategies as well as guarantee their implementation through specific institutions and personnel, which is a theme for a whole new book.

Nye's analysis lacks depth, but his end of chapter references are a treasure trove of "reading list." Read the book and then go to his references for more depth.

Well written and happily short review of America's current place in the world. Main takeaway is that America still leads, just in a more complicated world where being first is not always enough. The folks at CNN could use this as a reminder that American preeminence does not end the first moment that China's GDP surpasses our own. This book would be a good companion to Ian Bremmer's Every Nation For Itself...

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