

single candle than curse the darkness.” Both books, despite the daunting challenges to their tasks, seek to offer insight into how to build sustainable peace after civil war. The Roeder and Rothchild volume focuses on domestic political institutions, questions the assessment that power-sharing institutions are the most effective way to build sustainable peace, and offers instead power-dividing institutions as a possibly superior alternative. Doyle and Sambanis, by contrast, do not focus on domestic political institutions but instead address the most effective ways that the international community, mainly through the UN, can foster post-civil war sustainable peace. Although neither book completely dispels the darkness over our understanding of civil wars, both books illuminate an important piece of this complex and important political phenomenon.

**Reluctant Crusaders: Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy.** By Colin Dueck. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006. 236p. \$29.95.  
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— Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, *Tufts University*

The six years since the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington have seen a proliferation of books on the limits of U.S. primacy, the origins of the Bush doctrine, and the future of U.S. grand strategy. The conventional wisdom is that the George W. Bush administration's grand strategy—chiefly its unilateralism, its hubris, its open embrace of “preemption” (more accurately preventive war) as means to prevent states and terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, its pursuit of democratization in the Middle East as a cure-all for jihadist terrorism, and its refusal to plan for or devote sufficient resources to the postwar reconstruction of Iraq in 2003–4—represent a radical break with the grand strategies of previous administrations.

In *Reluctant Crusaders*, Colin Dueck not only challenges conventional wisdom, but also offers a warning: For better or ill, realism and liberalism will likely remain warring imperatives in U.S. foreign policy discourse, and future administrations will likely respond to international threats through the lens of liberal internationalism and limited liability. To paraphrase John Quincy Adams, America will likely continue to go abroad in search of monsters to destroy, but will be loath to buy a large enough sword to finish the task.

Dueck presents in-depth case studies of periods where the United States confronted new international threats and opportunities: the debate over participation in the League of Nations after World War I (1918–21); the aftermath of World War II and the origins of containment (1945–51); the debates over U.S. grand strategy following the Cold War (1990–2001); and the post-9/11 era and the Bush administration's “global war on terrorism.” In each period, the United States enjoyed a clear power advantage over cur-

rent and potential adversaries. Nevertheless, resulting shifts in grand strategy were not predictable based solely upon the international balance of power or underlying continuities in domestic politics and strategic culture. To explain this variation, Dueck develops a neoclassical realist theory of strategic adjustment. He tests his theory against two alternatives: the offensive realism of John Mearsheimer and cultural-constructivist theories of Thomas Berger, Alastair Iain Johnston, Jeffrey Legro, and Elizabeth Kier.

Neoclassical realism draws upon the rigor and theoretical clarity of the neorealism of Kenneth Waltz, Robert Gilpin, and others without sacrificing practical insights about foreign policy and the complexity of statecraft found in the classical realism of Hans J. Morgenthau, Henry Kissinger, Nicholas Spykman, and Arnold Wolfers. Systemic imperatives, chiefly relative power and anticipated power trends, shape the grand strategies of the great powers. Over the long run, international political outcomes mirror the distribution of power. However, as Gideon Rose observes, unit-level factors—namely leaders' perceptions and calculations about relative power and other states' intentions and domestic political constraints—often impede efficient responses to systemic imperatives. In the short run, the links between systemic forces and states' grand strategies are complex, indirect, and problematic (Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics* 51 [October 1998]: 144–77).

Building in part on earlier neoclassical realist works (e.g., see William Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance*, 1993; and Aaron Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State*, 2000), Dueck posits a crucial intervening role for elite belief systems in strategic adjustment. In the U.S. case, classical liberal assumptions—chiefly a deep-seated and often naive belief in spreading liberal democracy and open markets abroad as means to make the United States more secure—act as filters on potential policy options, “allowing certain strategic alternatives while rendering others unthinkable” (p. 4).

Thus, for example, in 1919–20, the option of a peacetime alliance with Great Britain and France as a hedge against a resurgent Germany was simply unthinkable for President Woodrow Wilson; U.S. participation in the League of Nations was the only viable route to postwar security (pp. 48–50). An amicable divorce of the World War II grand alliance, wherein the United States and the Soviet Union would divide Europe and Asia into spheres of influence, initially had support from some officials in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. However, President Harry Truman and his advisers quickly rejected realpolitik spheres of influence in favor of the more ambitious and risky strategy of containment (pp. 86–88). Finally, after the USSR's demise, neither the George H. W. Bush nor the Clinton administrations considered replacing containment with a grand strategy of offshore balancing as

many realists (including Waltz and Mearsheimer) advocated. Instead, they maintained forward troop deployments and established the maintenance of American preponderance beyond challenge as the central aim of their grand strategies (pp. 114–27).

“Limited liability”—a desire to limit costs of international commitments far more than most realist theories would predict—serves as the second filter in U.S. strategic adjustment. These two cultural legacies—liberal internationalism and limited liability—contradict each other and occasionally produce dysfunctional patterns in U.S. grand strategy. For example, in 1947–50, the Truman administration sought to contain the USSR, while simultaneously limiting defense budgets to \$45 billion per annum to mollify congressional Republicans. In the 1990s, the Clinton administration repeatedly threatened force to halt ethnic civil wars in Bosnia and Kosovo and to restore the democratically elected Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power. However, after the failed 1993 Somalia intervention, the administration was highly sensitive to military casualties. Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic and the Haitian military junta repeatedly called the United States’ bluff. As Dueck writes, “The result was a series of half-hearted interventions, which only served to reinforce the impressions that Americans were unwilling to sustain any significant costs on behalf of their role in the world” (p. 138). Finally, the current Bush administration embarked upon a grandiose project to remake the Middle East in America’s image “on the cheap” and now finds itself mired in an Iraqi civil war.

Realists have long lamented the periodic tendency of the United States to embark upon ideological crusades abroad. Dueck’s *Reluctant Crusaders* goes some way in providing a causal explanation for such anomalous, and at times, self-defeating, strategic behavior.

**The Samaritan’s Dilemma: The Political Economy of Development Aid.** By Clark C. Gibson, Krister Andersson, Elinor Ostrom, and Sujai Shivakumar. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. 288p. \$99.00 cloth, \$35.00 paper.  
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— Inge Kaul, Director, *Office of Development Studies at the United Nations*

The authors of this book start from the premise that there is something “wrong with development aid” (p. 3). They point to a number of studies that were conducted in the 1990s and found little consonance between foreign aid levels and changes in macrolevel indicators like economic growth and poverty reduction in recipient developing countries. Their aim is to explore the “perverse incentives” within the current aid system that militate against aid’s success.

Accordingly, the book examines the aid delivery process “from the home offices of the donor agency to the

recipients in the field” (p. 4). This process is perceived as a web of strategic relations among the various actor groups involved, whose incentives to contribute to foreign aid are assumed—and empirically shown—to depend on a wide gamut of factors, ranging from personal concerns and career ambitions to organizational and contractual arrangements.

Half of this 320-page book is devoted to an elaboration of the terms and concepts that form the building blocks of the authors’ analytical framework. The nonexpert reader thus receives a useful introduction to an understanding of public goods, collective action problems, principle-agent issues, information asymmetries, and institutional economics, as well as various aspects of foreign aid and international cooperation. The other half of the book discusses the findings of the archival research, interviews, and field studies undertaken for the purposes of this study.

Since the book emanates from consultancy work that the authors undertook on behalf of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the empirical data pertain primarily to SIDA. However, as they argue (and as is immediately obvious to anyone familiar with the reality of aid), many findings also apply to other aid agencies, bilateral as well as multilateral. In fact, the findings may even apply more generally to most any institutional context. They also lack novelty. Many management studies have identified the same or similar issues before, often, however, without the extensive theoretical discussion presented in the present book.

To illustrate, a key finding is that SIDA does not place sufficient emphasis on learning from past experience (p. 132 ff.). Another finding points to the fact that SIDA’s contractors apparently have an incentive to please the agency (p. 160ff.), no doubt in the hope, which they might share with many of the world’s consultants, that this “pays”—in terms of keeping them in the “good books” of the contract-issuing agency.

Other findings of the study raise basic conceptual issues, including the one that led to the book’s title, *The Samaritan Dilemma* (see especially Chapters 9 and 10). Like Samaritans, aid donors are said to *want* to assist the poor. Thus, if aid recipients fail in both taking full ownership of the project and sustaining its results (the two conditions that the authors see as critical for aid effectiveness), donors confront the dilemma that they nevertheless have to continue aid provision. By canceling aid, they would deprive themselves of an opportunity to do “good,” and thus experience a decrease in utility. However, this “story line” raises two questions.

One, is the lack of enthusiasm for project ownership on the part of the recipients necessarily due to the fact that they recognize the Samaritan in the donors? As the authors note, much of foreign aid is donor- or supply-driven. Donors not only want to do good but they often also assume that they know what is good for the recipient