

**Final Research Project: Fall 2009 – US Government
“The Future of American Power”**

**Final Due Date (last day to turn at full credit – late work reduced one letter grade):
Friday, January 22, 2010.**

Question: Few today would argue that the United States is the most powerful country that has probably ever existed – politically, economically, militarily, and in many ways socio-culturally. This unrivaled power has allowed most Americans to believe that we are uniquely and historically positioned to lead the world, and within some circles, divinely so. However, others have suggested that the sun is setting on American power and influence and that we will soon take our place among previous fallen empires. Examine the evidence from three of the most prominent schools of thought on this question to answer whether you believe America in your lifetime will experience a decline, or a renewal.

**Sample Outline
(But feel free to set this essay up as you wish)**

I. Introduction / Thesis Statement – a brief statement outlining your position or something relevant about this issue.

II. Body – the bulk of the paper is here, in data taken from the readings and other evidence that you have found to support your position.

A. Text DPE – what does your textbook have to say about the question of the future of American power? If it says little or nothing, why do you think that is?

B. Declinist DPE – starting with Kennedy and Wallerstein, explain the declinist school and analyze their data.

C. American Exceptionalism DPE – examine the work of D’Souza, Nye, and others to present and analyze this school of thought.

D. Neoimperialist DPE – primarily work from James Petras, but also review others from this theoretical position.

E. Outside DPE – are there other authors that you have examined that have a unique and/or important perspective on this question? They can of course come from any theoretical perspective.

III. Conclusion – where is America ultimately headed? Are there reasons to be concerned, or can we be confident that our power will remain supreme over an indefinite future?

Extras:

1. Make sure to include some form of citation (preferably APA) *every time you use a statement or an idea from the readings that I have provided, or that you found in your own independent research.* Using other’s work without providing proper citation is plagiarism and grounds for immediate failure on this essay. The bibliographical data can be found at the top of each reading in bold print.

2. Please type all work on a computer.

3. Please provide 1 copy of the essay. It will not be returned to you.

4. An “A” paper will be: a) fully documented and cited; b) a *minimum* of 10 pages in length; c) research *beyond* authors provided; and d) turned in *on time* (1-22-10).