



Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar, by Hendrik Frans Schaeffels, 1878, oil on canvas (Palais Dorotheum)

British Successes in 19th-Century Great Power Competition

Lessons for Today's Joint Force

By Isaac Johnson, Erik Lampe, and Keith Wilson

History lights the often dark path ahead; even if it's a dim light, it's better than none.

—JAMES MATTIS¹

Major Isaac Johnson, USA, is a Psychological Operations Officer at U.S. Space Command. Lieutenant Colonel Erik Lampe, USA, is J2 Executive Officer at U.S. Space Command. Lieutenant Colonel Keith Wilson, USAF, is an Assistant Professor at the United States Air Force Academy.

It is no accident that many of our nation's finest military minds—George Patton, Douglas MacArthur, Dwight Eisenhower—were avid readers of history. Former Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis's suggestion that “history lights the . . . path ahead” has proved accurate time and again. As the

U.S. security establishment pivots from a focus on counterterrorism to one of countering peer adversaries in new domains of conflict, history may again serve as a guide. As this pivot is under way, the country finds it is no longer the clear global hegemon but rather is operating in a multipolar global power

structure. How do we navigate this transition? In the decades after the American Revolution, Britain not only maintained its vital interests despite the loss of the American colonies, but it also successfully navigated a multipolar power structure to strengthen its position in the international community. This article explores 19th-century British strategies to maintain and expand global power that might offer helpful insight to today's joint force.

Britain's success was owed in large part to the employment of strategic agility. According to the Center for Management and Organization Effectiveness, strategic agility is "the ability for organizations to see shifts inside the . . . environment in which they operate. [It is] about staying competitive by recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities as well as identifying potential threats and mitigating or preventing them."² The British undertook both a reprioritization of global interests and a military rightsizing; pivoted to a new economic model that entailed a modified approach to key international

relationships; and embraced new technology, applying a public-private approach in doing so. The modifications made by Britain apply in meaningful ways to the challenges presented to the joint force today. For example, the concept of global integration offers both strategic opportunity and risks, with relatively scarce resources requiring clear and consistent prioritization to avoid overcommitment.³ This article begins with pertinent geopolitical and historical context, transitions to presenting specific evidence of British strategic agility, and concludes with recommended applications of these observations for the joint force.

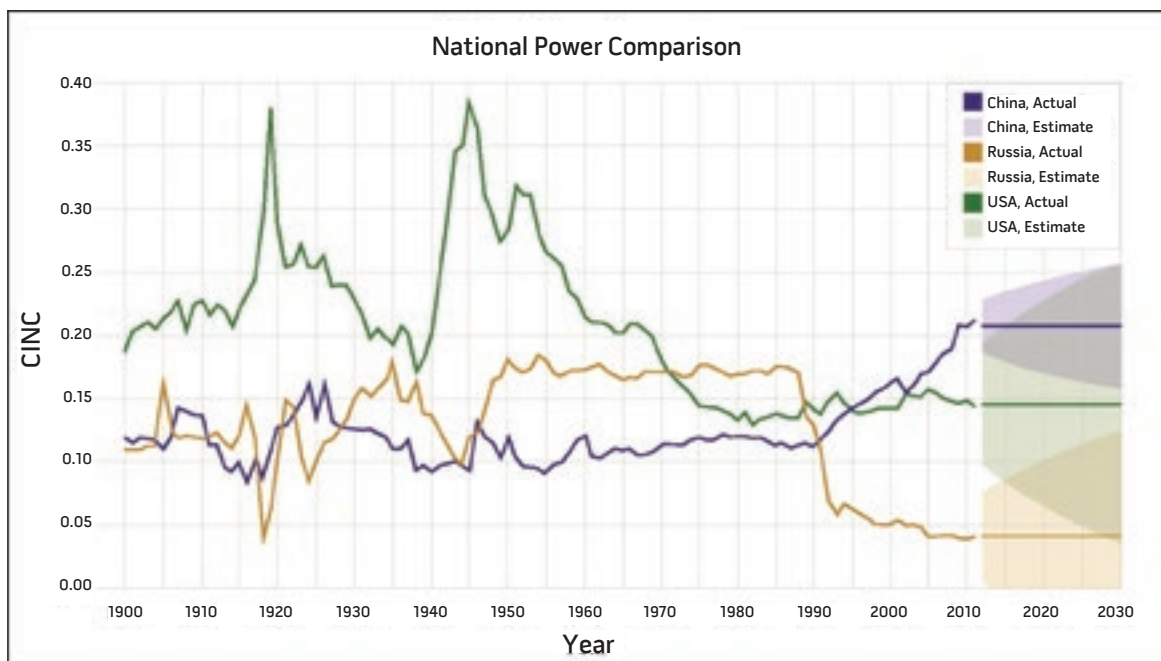
Background

The relative position of the United States in the global distribution of power since the Cold War has received considerable academic attention. Political scientists commonly accept that the fall of the Soviet Union marked the transition from a bipolar world to one in which the United States enjoyed global hegemony. However, 1991 was some time ago, and the United States

has faced enormous challenges to its supremacy over the past 30 years. Political science offers a compelling theoretical basis for the transitory nature of hegemony, and security scholars have studied the topic of American unipolarity and prospective decline for the past several decades.⁴ While some current works suggest the United States remains the sole global superpower, more argue it either is at risk of losing or has already lost its status as hegemon.⁵ Much of the variance in perspective centers around the devices employed to measure relative power.

Perhaps the most applied data set on power is the Correlates of War project, which uses a composite index of national capability measurements to compare total power and sources of power between states over time.⁶ The figure depicts the findings from these data that highlight a surge in relative power by China and a plateauing of U.S. power, offering strong evidence the United States now operates in a multipolar environment and perhaps has since the earliest days of its counterterrorism fight after September 11, 2001.

Figure. Composite Index of National Capability Comparison with Forecast (China, Russia, United States, 1900–2030)



Source: Based on J. David Singer, "Reconstructing the Correlates of War Dataset on Material Capabilities of States, 1816–1985," *International Interactions* 14, no. 2 (1988).



Chromolithograph of William Simpson's *India: Ancient and Modern*, illustrates return visit made by Viceroy Lord Canning to Maharaja Ranbir Singh of Jammu and Kashmir, on March 9, 1860, during viceroy's progress through upper India (British Library)

While U.S. decline may be a matter of debate, comparative gains by China make evident that, at the very least, the United States is no longer the world's hegemon.

Britain's shifting place in the world in the mid-18th through 19th centuries serves as a helpful comparison for the evolution of the political and economic position of the United States over the past 30 years. In 1763, Britain emerged from the Seven Years' War as the dominant global power, having secured North America and India from France and Spain.⁷ According to James Holmes, Britain presumed that such a complete victory put an end to Great Power competition, so it allowed its military—and especially its navy—to stagnate.⁸ France and Spain, however, spent 20 years reconstituting their forces,

determined to rebound from their losses in 1763.⁹ Meanwhile, increasing instability across the British Empire and a growing resistance movement in the American colonies forced the British military to shift to internal defense and counterinsurgency operations.

By 1775, Britain was fully engaged against a revolutionary insurgency in North America that eventually expanded into another global war with a resurgent France and Spain. With the conclusion of hostilities in 1783 under somewhat unfavorable terms, Britain lost its status as the unopposed hegemon to become an incumbent competitor vying for position in an evolving multipolar political environment.¹⁰ Having aided substantially in the American military victory during the

war, France gained ascendancy and began establishing norms regarding free trade to exploit as economic leverage, while French revolutionary idealism gained influence over Britain's war-weary people.¹¹ To further complicate matters, the British government had to cope with a significant blow to its international reputation, pay down an enormous national debt, and manage an internal political crisis between increasingly antagonistic parliamentary factions that destabilized the government and weakened its legitimacy among the British population.¹²

Britain learned a valuable lesson from the American Revolution: it cannot afford to sacrifice strategic flexibility to maintain combat power in a single peripheral theater to the detriment of vital



national concerns—for example, more economically essential colonies such as the Caribbean or even the homeland.¹³ From the end of the war and through the 19th century, Britain shaped its decision-making from its wartime experience and a renewed fear of losing further global influence to the French.¹⁴

Much like Britain following the Revolutionary War, the United States finds itself in transition. British success in the Seven Years' War and U.S. success in the Cold War lulled both great powers into a false sense of security regarding the durability of their dominance on the world stage, enabling challengers to reestablish capabilities and influence relatively unopposed. Like Britain in 1783, the United States is emerging from 20 years of counterinsurgency operations into an environment in which advances in capability and world influence by global competitors challenge its position on the world stage.¹⁵ The United States now faces ascendant and resurgent competitors in Russia and China, a public tired of war, a reshuffling

of financial priorities, internal political tensions, and enduring worldwide political and military commitments.¹⁶

As the United States increasingly operates within multipolarity, the presence of stronger strategic challengers renders the pursuit of national interests more difficult. It is only natural to ask how the United States might best compete in this environment. Nineteenth-century Britain's example in successfully applying strategic agility to gain and maintain influence in a multipolar environment suggests an important lesson for U.S. decisionmakers and the joint force. The following three sections offer evidence of British strategic agility across three pillars—strategic prioritization, a whole-of-government pivot, and incorporation of key technologies—each of which provides lessons for the joint force today.

Britain's Strategic Prioritization

The end of the American Revolutionary War represented a reflection point for British leadership. Amid squabbling

over who was to blame for the loss of the American colonies, attention quickly shifted to what mattered most: Britain's remaining security obligations and the required size of force to address these priorities. In a notably proactive step, Britain undertook a deliberate reprioritization of strategic interests and then rightsized its force to address these interests. The British realized they could not be everywhere at once and do everything they might like. They had to make difficult choices about where to apply scarce resources and which critical gaps to fill. Taking this step was not automatic, but they saw that the consequences of not reprioritizing were likely to be a rapid decline of the empire as overcommitment further set in. Therefore, establishing clear priorities and properly resourcing them was the first and most important example of British strategic agility.

Following the surrender of Lord Cornwallis in Yorktown in 1781, well before the war had ended, the British decided to prioritize interests in the



Aircraft from United Kingdom's carrier strike group led by HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, and U.S. Navy carrier strike groups led by flagships USS *Ronald Reagan* and USS *Carl Vinson*, fly in formation during carrier strike group operations in Philippine Sea, October 3, 2021 (U.S. Navy/Gray Gibson)

Caribbean, maritime Europe, and the Indian Ocean over its American colonies.¹⁷ Continued pressure from strategic adversaries France and Spain in new combat theaters and challenges to Britain's expeditionary force caused Britain to relegate the Americas to a secondary interest to preserve strength elsewhere. Britain placed the defense of its claims in the Caribbean Islands above all other strategic priorities, risking even invasion of the homeland, believing the loss of the sugar islands would have catastrophic consequences to its greater imperial goals.¹⁸ By this time, the plantation system in the British West Indies was the British economic center of gravity, which financed the empire's global reach.¹⁹ In particular, Britain drew considerable wealth from Jamaica, making it the most valuable island in the most valuable colony, the loss of which the British could least afford.²⁰

Next, Britain prioritized defense of its homeland through the preservation of primacy in maritime Europe, as it remained engaged in Great Power

competition with France, Spain, and the Dutch Republic over a range of colonial and commercial issues. Britain stood largely alone fighting an extensive global land and naval conflict, while invasion of the homeland by European antagonists remained a serious concern. France aimed to gain equal status to Britain's and threatened to invade territorial Britain to achieve this goal.²¹ Meanwhile, losses mounted in the western Mediterranean region in addition to those in the Americas. For example, a French and Spanish fleet retook Minorca—a strategic deep-water port—from the British in August 1781, putting the British fortress at Gibraltar at risk and threatening further to degrade Britain's position near its home waters.²² Britain, therefore, prioritized the active defense of local and regional maritime interests as a principal means of defending the homeland.

Third, the British prioritized interests in India for its natural resources, market opportunity, and geographic positioning. Britain came to rely on the vast amounts

of commodities available on the Indian subcontinent, including cotton, silk, porcelain, spices, tea, and coffee. Many of these resources were extracted, returned home for production, and then sold back to or through India. India also represented a gateway to China—yet another market to sustain Britain's global empire.²³

Britain's decision to downgrade its American colonies in priority required overcoming considerable thinking associated with sunk costs.²⁴ Ultimately, Britain did not possess sufficient assets to protect all its interests, forcing a difficult decision about where its interests were most at stake. The American campaign, therefore, was reduced to a secondary interest. Additionally, Britain took to rightsizing its force. In the 30 years following the American Revolution, the British army grew from roughly 40,000 to 250,000 men for war with France from 1803 to 1814.²⁵ This increase in ground forces allowed the British to fight successfully across a range of fronts during the Napoleonic Wars, culminating

in the Battle of Waterloo.²⁶ Meanwhile, strategic reprioritization allowed Britain to concentrate its naval forces to defend itself at sea, both at home and across major trading routes.²⁷

Efficiencies achieved by applying resources to clear priorities led to the consolidation of the Royal Navy's advantage over other powers, perhaps best reflected during this period by the defeat of French and Spanish fleets at the Battle of Trafalgar.²⁸ After these wars, Britain significantly reduced the size of its ground forces to more sustainable levels.²⁹ By the mid-19th century, the process of consolidating interests, setting clear priorities, and then adjusting the force to meet the needs presented by these priorities proved instrumental in Britain's rise to global hegemon during the later Victorian era.

Whole-of-Government Pivot

Following defeat in the American Revolutionary War and the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, Britain faced multiple challenges: an oversized debt load from the previous two wars, a navy requiring expansion, and challenges from France and other colonial powers.³⁰ Britain realized its interaction with its colonies had to change lest it risk their loss from demands of self-governance or another colonial war.³¹ Britain addressed this issue through a whole-of-government approach to change its economic model, increase utilization of treaties and agreements, and engage in coalition-building with partners to counter French expansion. This initial approach to contain France's ascendancy would serve as a blueprint for future British policies.

Britain had already started the move from mercantilism toward free trade economics prior to the Revolutionary War. As part of its diplomatic strategy, it attempted to engage France in trade, leading to a "most favored nation"-type treaty in 1786 between France and Britain.³² This treaty would end with the French Revolution in 1789, forcing a change in Britain's engagement strategy with the new revolutionary French government and leading Britain to further embrace free trade across its colonies and with a

growing number of neutral nations.³³ While mercantilism and protectionist policies would endure for several decades, the increased economic gain from free trade and manufacturing progress aided Britain in servicing debt, building coalitions, and expanding military capability and control.³⁴ Britain continued expanding free trade policies throughout the 19th century, including the 1843–1849 laws ending tariffs on imported grains and further agreements in 1860 to reduce tariffs between France and Britain.³⁵ As an island nation, Britain had to maintain the ability to project naval power and secure its global trade enterprise, which fed the British economic engine and sustained its expeditionary military capability.

Britain also employed laws, treaties, and agreements to stabilize theaters of operations while enabling moral and legal justification for action. The Jay Treaty of 1794 is one example of the British ensuring economic growth, enabling reprioritization of military resources, and securing U.S. neutrality.³⁶ The treaty gave the United States most favored trade status while leaving Britain free to embargo French trade and continue to impress foreign sailors, providing a source of labor critical to British naval strength.³⁷ Similarly, the Slave Trade Act of 1807 further justified British naval actions against slave-trading competitors and undermined a vital source of labor for France and its colonies.³⁸

To further contain French expansion that threatened British interests, Britain formed or joined seven international coalitions between 1792 and 1815, allying with more than 20 nations, including Spain, Russia, and Austria.³⁹ Enhanced by its significant trade and manufacturing capabilities, the British subsidized allies within these coalitions to provide economic and military means to contain French influence.⁴⁰ Britain's ability to utilize a whole-of-government approach to building an economic and military defense structure, supported by a rapidly advancing joint force to enforce and protect these structures, was critical to containing France and establishing the foundation for reasserting British influence and global leadership.

Incorporation of Key Technologies

From 1760 through the end of the 19th century, Britain enjoyed successive industrial revolutions that helped advance its national interests. Although not all the advances during this era originated in Britain, the Industrial Revolution as a transformative process began in Britain and was British-led, and the results were exploited for British benefit to a greater extent than in other European powers of the time.⁴¹ Several international relations theories assert that technological innovation is a critical variable in establishing political and economic system dominance.⁴² A full description of the relationship between technology and Britain's 19th-century rise would fill its own essay. Still, the criticality of certain technological developments to Britain's attainment of its strategic goals warrants a brief treatment here.

As British international trade expanded throughout the 19th century, increased economic opportunity shrank the available labor pool from which the military could recruit.⁴³ This trend, compounded by a significant military reduction after the Napoleonic Wars and the continuing challenge of maintaining a global empire, required the British military to develop modern technologies to augment its limited manpower. As historian John Shy points out, European armies operated from the same technological base for more than a century, until the explosion of technology in the early 1800s radically advanced the conduct of warfare.⁴⁴ The British military's most notable advances developed or adopted by 1850 to exploit this expansion included the steam engine, the locomotive, interchangeable parts, the percussion ignition system, and the rifle.⁴⁵

As noted, British naval capability lagged relative to that of other powers before the American Revolution, primarily because of attempts to reduce costs and increase efficiency in peacetime, which rendered them unprepared for the wars that would come.⁴⁶ After the American Revolution, the British admiralty endeavored to reinvent the navy; it had

made significant headway in increasing the number and quality of ships and regained dominance by the Napoleonic Wars.⁴⁷ Continued development in the 19th century of steam-powered ships and the incorporation of the first screw propeller in 1837 drastically increased the speed and agility of British warships

while allowing them to maintain a full complement of weapons.⁴⁸ These new steam-powered ships, sustained by Britain's global supply network, served as the foundation of a new maritime force able to project power across the empire.⁴⁹

On land, as on the seas, the steam engine enabled the development of

transnational and transcontinental rail systems, which the British built across the empire to increase the speed and capacity of colonial export shipments during peace and to serve as a military transportation system during war.⁵⁰ Ironically, the expansion of rail infrastructure across the European continent reduced the



United Kingdom Royal Marines from 45 Commando and U.S. Army Green Berets from 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) provide security before entering building during close quarter battle training at Grafenwöhr Training Area, Germany, September 22, 2022 (U.S. Army/Mercedes Johnson)

efficacy of British naval power—Britain’s traditional source of strategic leverage—by reducing European vulnerability to blockades and increasing the speed and responsiveness of land forces to territorial threats.⁵¹ Thus, Britain needed to make further advances in land power to maintain a competitive edge.⁵²

Progress in industrial manufacturing and machining also allowed the mass production of advanced weapons technology. For example, the faster and more reliable percussion ignition system in firearms, standardized firearm components, and eventually breech-loading mechanisms elevated the rifle from a niche support weapon to the infantry’s primary armament, significantly increasing the range and lethality of the core of the British army.⁵³ In addition, Britain used its significant manufacturing capacity to generate income and build coalitions across Europe to compete with France.⁵⁴ Although the British did not invent all these technologies, Britain’s strategic flexibility in embracing scientific innovations from across Europe, its willingness to experiment with new tools and techniques, and its prioritization of funding for promising technologies kept it at the forefront of military advancement throughout the 19th century.

What Can We Learn?

The 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) describes a strategic environment rich with complexity, in which Great Power competition, rogue regimes, a weakening post-World War II international order, terror groups, and transnational crime threaten U.S. interests. The convergence of these threats is occurring as technology changes the character of war and conflict operates across domains with increasing speed and reach.⁵⁵ President Joseph Biden’s 2021 Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (INSSG) continues to emphasize these themes, citing a revolution in technology, threats that defy borders, and a changing distribution of power across the world.⁵⁶ It would not be difficult to conclude from this description of our global environment that the United

States must engage everywhere—and the NDS and subsequent guidance illustrate a prescription for doing so.

The concept of global integration highlights the interwoven nature of the threat environment, prompting commanders across the globe to recognize equities they have in challenges historically treated as beyond their responsibility. The United States, however, cannot sufficiently address all that threatens its interests. Instead, it must put consistent effort toward the highest strategic priorities, much as Great Britain did following the loss of the American colonies in 1781. Substantive differences exist between the U.S. operating environment and that of the British in the late 18th century. The American colonies were not an existential threat to Britain, so King George III could afford to relegate the Americas to a secondary interest without considerable risk. In contrast, much of what the United States treats as a lesser priority possesses the ability to cause significant harm to U.S. interests. For example, violent extremism is considered the fifth-most-important security threat today, following China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran. However, extremist organizations in several parts of the world possess the ability and intent to attack U.S. forces and their allies, if not threaten the homeland. No such risk attached to Britain in forgoing the American colonies.

Despite these differences, the critical parallel between British behavior in the late 18th century and the conditions in which U.S. joint force operates today remains: the necessity of clear prioritization of effort in a resource-constrained environment. We must be clear-eyed about the depth of challenges associated with the strategic environment; however, we must also be clear about where precisely we are focused and where we are assuming risk. And as the United States responds to a shifting environment with prospective new threats and activity from lower priorities, we must consider the risks of adjusting course too often. In addition to adhering to clear priorities, we must also secure a force size and structure able to meet those priorities.

Like Britain in the 18th century, the United States is engaged globally, depends on the sea, and operates with constrained resources and worldwide obligations, which require the joint force to partner across the whole of government to ensure U.S. interests are secured. The joint force must be able to defend trade routes and accesses that are critical to national economic growth. It must partner effectively not only across the whole of government but also with allied nations to ensure access and capability in the growing domains of cyber and space, each of which plays a key role in driving economic growth and enabling the force projection essential to protecting U.S. interests worldwide.⁵⁷ The United States must continue to use existing alliances, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, while adapting its role for a multipolar world, and it must develop new military and economic coalitions to ensure freedom of trade.

Britain’s 19th-century technological development provides two lessons for the modern U.S. joint force. First, the United States must aggressively experiment with, adapt, and adopt promising new technologies developed through public-private partnerships to maintain an edge against global competitors. Today’s fourth industrial revolution offers a significant opportunity for the U.S. military to exert influence through technological innovation in various fields, including quantum computing, robotics, artificial intelligence, and biotechnology.⁵⁸ Examples abound of the U.S. military’s current efforts to modernize, including a global defense network linking all military platforms into a digital nervous system as well as numerous projects by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and various think tanks.⁵⁹ However, the U.S. military must resist the temptation to expend precious resources on new projects on the basis of the allure of novel technologies. It must first determine the strategic value of potential technologies, then pursue opportunities for developing the most promising ones through collaboration with like-minded private businesses.

Second, the United States must use the development and propagation of

novel technologies to strategic advantage by presenting allies and partners with alternatives to the technology and equipment offered by strategic competitors. As the INSSG attests, the United States amplifies its power by strengthening its partnerships. That strengthening should include mutual technological advancement, as the British realized nearly two centuries ago.⁶⁰

Conclusion

The United States faces a moment of not only strategic complexity but also considerable opportunity. This article adds a voice to the discussion of how the United States should maintain and advance its interests in the coming years. The lessons derived from the British experience of the 18th and 19th centuries can help the United States navigate an increasingly multipolar security environment to advance its interests and to maximize its strategic position. The joint force will play a key role in operationalizing the three pillars of strategic agility: reprioritizing global interests and military right-sizing, contributing to a whole-of-government approach to international engagement, and embracing new technology through public-private collaboration. The United States should adhere to these three pillars to optimize its scarce resources, directing them toward priority threats and opportunities in the modern operating environment. The risk incurred in deviating from high priorities and the risk accepted on lower priorities must also be clear.

The United States will need to adjust its force size and structure to meet its priorities. The joint force will succeed only by fostering effective partnerships across the interagency community and with foreign nations. Although each of the pillars identified above warrants considerably more attention than space allows, the process of distilling complex history into lessons most worth learning is one of great value to decisionmakers. As an example of such distillation, this article serves as the basis for the joint force to identify the most crucial variables

to reestablish the U.S. power advantages and think through the military's role in national power. With more to do than we have the resources to accomplish, history must light the path ahead. JFQ

Notes

¹ Jim Mattis and Bing West, *Call Sign Chaos: Learning to Lead* (New York: Random House, 2019), 237.

² "Strategic Agility," Center for Management and Organization Effectiveness, available at <<https://cmoe.com/glossary/strategic-agility>>.

³ *Global integration* is defined as the arrangement of cohesive military actions in time, space, and purpose, executed to address transregional, all-domain, and multifunctional challenges. See Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3050.01, *Implementing Global Integration* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, December 31, 2018), A-1.

⁴ Hegemonic stability, power transition, relative power cycle, and leadership long cycle models studied by scholars such as Robert Gilpin, A.F.K. Organski, Charles Doran, George Modelski, and William Thompson emphasize the world's leading position as transitory, with powers rising, plateauing, and then declining. Other examples of studies on this topic include Michael Mastanduno, "Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy After the Cold War," *International Security* 21, no. 4 (Spring 1997), 49–88; Michael Cox, "Whatever Happened to American Decline? International Relations and the New United States Hegemony," *New Political Economy* 6, no. 3 (November 2001), 311–340; Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Decline of American Power: The U.S. in a Chaotic World* (New York: The New Press, 2003); Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Christopher Layne, "The Waning of U.S. Hegemony—Myth or Reality? A Review Essay," *International Security* 34, no. 1 (Summer 2009).

⁵ For specific examples of arguments on the U.S. hegemonic decline, see Hang Nguyen Thi Thuy, "The United States: Still a Hegemonic Power?" *Journal of International Studies* 8 (January 2012), 15–29; Alexander Cooley and Daniel H. Nexon, "How Hegemony Ends: The Unraveling of American Power," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2020, available at <[https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-06-09/how-hegemony-ends?utm_medium=social&fbclid=IwAR3ctOsK9us-Bz4L_unfnice3WTG4kuXQNEAZZ49-](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-06-09/how-hegemony-ends?utm_medium=social&fbclid=IwAR3ctOsK9us-Bz4L_unfnice3WTG4kuXQNEAZZ49-jmClqpNylEIs6oXWcgI)

>[jmClqpNylEIs6oXWcgI](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-06-09/how-hegemony-ends?utm_medium=social&fbclid=IwAR3ctOsK9us-Bz4L_unfnice3WTG4kuXQNEAZZ49-jmClqpNylEIs6oXWcgI)>.

⁶ J. David Singer, "Reconstructing the Correlates of War Dataset on Material Capabilities of States, 1816–1985," *International Interactions* 14, no. 2 (1988), 115–132.

⁷ John Burrow, "British Imperialism in the Age of William Pitt the Younger, 1783–1793" (master's thesis, Murray State University, 2014), 23.

⁸ James R. Holmes, "Lessons From George III," *Naval History Magazine* 32, no. 4 (August 2018), available at <<https://www.usni.org/magazines/naval-history-magazine/2018/august/lessons-george-iii>>.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Burrow, "British Imperialism in the Age of William Pitt the Younger, 1783–1793," 27.

¹¹ Thomas F. Lynch III and Frank Hoffman, "Past Eras of Great Power Competition: Historical Insights and Implications," in *Strategic Assessment 2020: Into a New Era of Great Power Competition*, ed. Thomas F. Lynch III (Washington, DC: NDU Press, 2020), available at <<https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/2404297/2-past-eras-of-great-power-competition-historical-insights-and-implications/>>; Oscar Browning, "The Treaty of Commerce Between England and France in 1786," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 2, no. 4 (1885), 349–364; "Peace of Paris," *Britannica*, available at <<https://www.britannica.com/event/Peace-of-Paris-1783>>.

¹² "Debate in the Lords Respecting the Articles of the Provisional Treaty of Peace Relative to the Recognition of the Independence of America," in *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, vol. 23, ed. William Cobbett (London: R. Bagshaw, 1814), 305, available at <<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/66635dd6-ce0b-4c3e-9782-bd9d4413189c/>>.

¹³ Holmes, "Lessons From George III."

¹⁴ Burrow, "British Imperialism in the Age of William Pitt the Younger, 1783–1793," 29.

¹⁵ Jacob L. Heim and Benjamin M. Miller, *Measuring Power, Power Cycles, and the Risk of Great-Power War in the 21st Century* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2020), available at <<https://doi.org/10.7249/RR2989>>.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*; Peter Rudolf, *War Weariness and Change in Strategy in U.S. Policy on Afghanistan* (Berlin: German Institute for International and Security Affairs, 2011), 8, available at <https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2011C31_rdf_ks.pdf>.

¹⁷ Holmes, "Lessons from George III."

¹⁸ Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 208.

¹⁹ Selwyn H.H. Carrington, "The American Revolution and the British West

Indies Economy,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17, no. 4 (Spring 1987), 823–850.

²⁰ T.G. Burnard, “‘Prodigious Riches’: The Wealth of Jamaica Before the American Revolution,” *The Economic History Review* 54, no. 3 (August 2001), 506–524.

²¹ Gene Procknow, “How the British Won the American Revolutionary War,” *Journal of the American Revolution*, July 27, 2015, available at <<https://allthingsliberty.com/2015/07/how-the-british-won-the-american-revolutionary-war/>>.

²² Ibid.

²³ Shashi Tharoor, *An Era of Darkness: The British Empire in India* (New Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2016), 21–40.

²⁴ The term *sunk costs* refers to loss aversion and the failure to renormalize the reference point after losses. See Jack S. Levy, “Loss Aversion, Framing, and Bargaining: The Implications of Prospect Theory for International Conflict,” *International Political Science Review* 17, no. 2 (April 1996), 179–195.

²⁵ David G. Chandler and Ian Beckett, eds., *The Oxford History of the British Army* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

²⁶ British engagements stretching across the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars included Mysore, Toulon, Flanders, West Indies, Muizenberg and Ceylon, Ireland, Mysore (again), Holland, Egypt, Maratha, West Indies (again), Hanover, Naples, Sicily and the Mediterranean, South Africa and the Plate, Denmark, Alexandria, Walcheren, Indian Ocean and East Indies, Holland (again), North America, and Waterloo.

²⁷ Martin Robson, *A History of the Royal Navy: The Napoleonic Wars* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2014).

²⁸ Geoffrey Till, “Trafalgar and the Decisive Naval Battles of the 21st Century,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 18, no. 3 (October 2005), 455–470.

²⁹ Robson, *A History of the Royal Navy*.

³⁰ “Treaty of Paris, 1783,” Office of the Historian, Department of State, available at <<https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/ar/14313.htm>>.

³¹ Lebbeus R. Wilfley, “How Great Britain Governs Her Colonies,” *Yale Law Journal* 9, no. 5 (March 1900), 207–214.

³² Browning, “The Treaty of Commerce Between England and France in 1786,” 349–364.

³³ Gene A. King, Jr., “The Development of Free Trade in Europe,” Paper presented at the 2008 Free Market Forum, Dearborn, Michigan, September 25–27, 2008, available at <<https://www.hillsdale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/FMF-2008-Development-of-Free-Trade-in-Europe.pdf>>.

³⁴ “Napoleonic Wars, The Treaty of Amiens,” *Britannica*, available at <<https://www.britannica.com/event/Napoleonic-Wars/The-Treaty-of-Amiens#ref336842>>;

Wilfley, “How Great Britain Governs Her Colonies.”

³⁵ Wilfley, “How Great Britain Governs Her Colonies”; King, “The Development of Free Trade in Europe.”

³⁶ Anuj Kumar Vaksha, “Jay Treaty 1794: The Treasure Trove for Principles of International Law on Protection of Foreign Investments,” *U.S.-China Law Review* 16, no. 7 (July 2019), 281–292.

³⁷ Ibid. Impressment remained a source of contention and is often cited as a cause of the War of 1812.

³⁸ Stephen Farrell, “‘Contrary to the Principles of Justice, Humanity and Sound Policy’: The Slave Trade, Parliamentary Politics and the Abolition Act, 1807,” *Parliamentary History* 26, no. 4 (2007), 141–202.

³⁹ Édouard Driault, “The Coalition of Europe Against Napoleon,” *The American Historical Review* 24, no. 4 (July 1919), 603–624.

⁴⁰ “Napoleonic Wars, The Treaty of Amiens.”

⁴¹ “Industrial Revolution,” *Britannica*, available at <<https://www.britannica.com/event/Industrial-Revolution>>.

⁴² For a more detailed discussion on lateral pressure theory and long cycle theory, two theories that describe how technology and innovation factor into establishing political and economic dominance, see Nazli Choucri and Robert C. North, “Lateral Pressure in International Relations: Concept and Theory,” in *Handbook of War Studies I*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky (New York: Routledge, 2011); Karen Rasler and William R. Thompson, “Global War and the Political Economy of Structural Change,” in *Handbook of War Studies II*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 301–331.

⁴³ David M. Rowe, David H. Bearce, and Patrick J. McDonald, “Binding Prometheus: How the 19th-Century Expansion of Trade Impeded Britain’s Ability to Raise an Army,” *International Studies Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (December 2002), 551–578, available at <<https://academic.oup.com/isq/article/46/4/551/1794405>>.

⁴⁴ David D. Bien, with commentary by John Shy, “Military Education in 18th Century France: Technical and Non-Technical Determinants,” in *Science, Technology, and Warfare: The Proceedings of the Third Military History Symposium*, ed. Monte D. Wright and Lawrence J. Paszek (Colorado Springs: U.S. Air Force Academy, Office of Air Force History, 1969), 61–63, available at <<https://media.defense.gov/2010/Sep/29/2001329779/-1/-1/0/AFD-100929-008.pdf>>.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Holmes, “Lessons from George III.”

⁴⁷ Christine Macleod et al., “Making

Waves: The Royal Navy’s Management of Invention and Innovation in Steam Shipping, 1815–1832,” *History and Technology* 16, no. 4 (January 2000), 308.

⁴⁸ Lawrence Sondhaus, *Naval Warfare, 1815–1914* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 37–42.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Barry Buzan, *An Introduction to Strategic Studies: Military Technology and International Relations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1987), 22–24.

⁵¹ Rowe, Bearce, and McDonald, “Binding Prometheus,” 553.

⁵² Ibid., 553–554.

⁵³ Buzan, *An Introduction to Strategic Studies*, 20–24.

⁵⁴ “Industrial Revolution.”

⁵⁵ *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military’s Competitive Edge* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2018), 2–3, available at <<https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>>.

⁵⁶ *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance* (Washington, DC: The White House, March 2021), 7–9.

⁵⁷ “Cybersecurity and the New Era of Space Activities,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 3, 2018, available at <<https://www.cfr.org/report/cybersecurity-and-new-era-space-activities>>.

⁵⁸ Njuguna Ndung’u and Landry Signé, “The Fourth Industrial Revolution and Digitization Will Transform Africa Into a Global Powerhouse,” in *Foresight Africa 2020*, ed. Brahim S. Coulibaly and Christina Golubski (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2020), 61, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ForesightAfrica2020_Chapter5_20200110.pdf>.

⁵⁹ Patrick Tucker, “The Future the U.S. Military Is Constructing: A Giant, Armed Nervous System,” *Defense One*, September 26, 2017, available at <<https://www.defenseone.com/technology/2017/09/future-us-military-constructing-giant-armed-nervous-system/141303/>>.

⁶⁰ *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance*.