



# The Endgame of Globalization

*By Neil Smith*

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## Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

CURRENT AFFAIRS / POLITICS

The recent American invasion of Iraq represents the "endgame" of America's decades-old effort to impose its vision of globalization—a system dominated by multinational firms and buttressed by the liberalism of John Locke and Adam Smith. Whereas the war surely ended Saddam Hussein's regime, the storm of countervailing forces it unleashed points to another end: that of America's latest global project.

This is not the first time that the US has tried to reshape the world in its own liberal image, but the third. The first effort stretched from the late nineteenth century to 1920, ending when America rejected entry into the League of Nations. The FDR administration engineered the second attempt in the 1940s, but it withered in the Cold War. The third moment—the era of globalization—began in the late 1960s, when the US transformed the Bretton Woods financial institutions and used its own economic power to enforce a worldwide neoliberal orthodoxy tied to an ideal of liberal democracy. But the effort is failing for the same reasons the preceding attempts failed.

As Neil Smith shows, the Lockean liberalism that animates American globalism has always been undercut by a crippling nationalism that exposes the contradictions built into the ideal. In each instance, a hard-edged nationalism—evident in the rejection of the League of Nations, in the policies of the Cold War, and in the current Iraq war—always surfaces and drives US actions despite America's self-perception as a champion of benign universal values.

Moreover, it always generates opposition. Attuned to history, political economy, and geography, *The Endgame of Globalization* is a sweeping and powerful account of America's century-long quest for global dominance and the nationalism within that invariably unravels the dream.

### About the Author

Neil Smith is Distinguished Professor of Geography and Anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate Center and Director of CUNY's Center for Place, Culture, and Politics. He is the author of *Uneven Development*, *The New Urban Frontier*, and *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization*, which received The Los Angeles Times Book Award for biography in 2003.

### From the Back Cover

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"A strong and powerful argument that puts neo-liberals, neo-imperialists and neo-conservatives to shame. A magisterial debunking of what has become the common sense of vulture capitalism."

—Tariq Ali

"In this brilliantly argued book, Neil Smith depicts 'American globalism' historically and in the aftermath of 9/11. What emerges is a devastating critique of the imperial dreams that have plunged the country into a disastrous war in Iraq, and are but the latest example of a far older American impulse to govern the world for its own benefit. Every citizen, seeking to understand both the uniqueness of the Bush presidency and its

continuity with such earlier visionary leaders as Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, will gain insight from this invaluable study."

—Richard Falk, author of *Predatory Globalization* and *The Declining World Order*

"This lucid and highly original book charts attempts to develop an American liberal and global empire. Finding surprising similarities between the three presidencies, of Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt and George W. Bush, Smith argues that each of their imperial projects was undermined by a nationalism which he finds lurking at the heart of American liberalism. The arguments are trenchant, often polemical, but also in the main compelling. But even if you don't agree, you should be greatly stimulated by *The Endgame of Globalization*."

—Michael Mann, author of *Incoherent Empire*

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