

Robin Peterson, "US Foreign Policy and The Project for a New American Century: The Influence of Neoconservatism Post-9/11."

Abstract: This paper examines how a deeply-entrenched subset of the US foreign policy establishment has been able to drive US behavior abroad using a seductive, but arguably dangerous, set of arguments rooted in staunch American exceptionalism. Summarizing the careers and writings of Robert Kagan, Bill Kristol, and their families, including the numerous think tanks, academic institutions, boards, and media outlets they have founded, presided over, and/or served on, this paper illuminates the ideas these individuals have deployed to achieve their specific vision of America living up to its potential. The paper makes clear the ethical compromises that accompanied implementation of some of those ideas and the material, human, and financial costs of decisions underpinned by neoconservatism. Moreover, it explains how the Project for a New American Century shuttered as the views and individuals associated with it were tarnished by the souring of the war in Iraq. Nonetheless, the ideas retain potent appeal and have resurfaced in the recent establishment of the Vandenburg Coalition, a new think tank committed to providing and promoting neoconservative policy guidance.