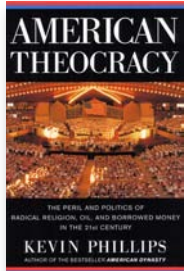


TOPIC

American Theocracy: The Perils and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil and Borrowed Money



These threats are converging in the 2000s and 2010s in a way that creates major analogies to the Achilles heels of previous leading world economic powers and demand attention at the highest level.

1. *America's Triple Threat:* The book's subtitle identifies them—radical and even Armageddon-threaded religion; U.S. dependence on oil (that's running out); and the burden of ballooning U.S. public and private debt. Parenthetically, the issues of Middle East terrorism and national security are developed in the frameworks of radical religion and oil.
2. *The Warnings—What Brought Down Previous Leading World Economic Powers:* From Rome down to the early 20th century Britain, recurring Achilles heels have included moral and economic decay, the growth of missionary, crusading or state religion, foreign policy and military hubris and over-reach, dangerous levels of debt and reliance on finance, and re-aligning world fuel and energy patterns. All now threaten the United States.
3. *These Problems in the Early 21st Century U.S.:* Fear of decay and decline . . . conservatives worry about morals, liberals about fairness and economics. As for fuel and energy, the U.S. dominated the 20th century militarily and economically through oil; if we lose that edge—a real possibility—U.S. global leadership will crumble. Debt's huge growth has gone hand in hand with finance displacing manufacturing as the mainstay of the U.S.

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Kevin Phillips

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economy; an early 2000s credit and housing finance bubble may be about to pop, with grave consequences. And then there's radicalized religion.

4. *Radical Religion and Global Crusading:* Few Americans realize the many dimensions of the problem—the unique U.S. history as a nation of radical and personal salvation Protestant sects and commitment to biblical inerrancy and prophecy; the huge late 20th century surge; the re-aligning role of the Republican Southern Strategy in concentrating religious Americans in one political party and the GOP's emergence

as the first religious party (counting some 70% of regular churchgoers); the majority support of GOP voters for the Bible-as-truth, togetherness between church and state; George W. Bush's unique recognition as both U.S. president and the leader of the Religious Right; and the overlap between End Times theology and the U.S. military presence in Iraq.

5. *The Critical Convergence:* How many of these problems and forces are converging in the 2000s and the 2010s and what it may mean for the American people.